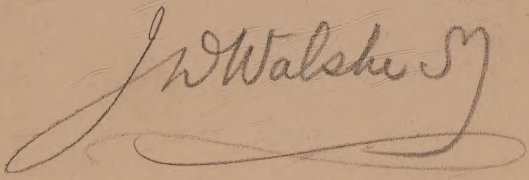
THE ADORABLE HEART OF JESUS

FATHER JOSEPH DE GALLIFFET, S. J.



THE ADORABLE HEART OF JESUS.

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THE ADORABLE HEART OF JESUS.

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BY

FATHER JOSEPH DE GALLIFFET.

With Preface and Introduction by

FATHER RICHARD CLARKE, S.J.

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PREFACE.

FATHER JOSEPH DE GALLIFFET has been called, and with great justice, the apostle of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart. It was he who bore the brunt of the struggle in its behalf. It is to him that we owe the publication of the Memoir of Blessed Margaret Mary written by herself; it is he who first laid at the feet of the Holy Father the petition for the establishment of the Feast; it was he who, when the petition was negatived by the Sacred Congregation, pursued with undaunted perseverance the task entrusted to him by Almighty God, knowing well that this first rebuff was but the signal of coming victory; it was he who by his life and writings contributed more than any one else to procure the decree of 1765, which granted to the Bishops of Poland and to the Archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart at Rome permission to celebrate the Feast with a Mass and Office of its own.

It was in 1726 that Father Galliffet published the first edition of the work which is now, we believe for the first time, appearing in an English dress. It was originally written in Latin, but seven years later the author issued it in French, with many additions and improvements. The dogmatic and historical arguments are greatly developed in the French edition, which has been reprinted again and again, and translated into Italian, German, Polish, Spanish, &c.

The book is divided into three parts. The first explains the historical origin and progress of the Devotion, its nature according to the principles of theology, and the difference that exists between it and the Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, which latter had been often urged as rendering it unnecessary. The second part is a panegyric of the Devotion itself, and sets forth its excellence both on account of its Divine object, the end which it proposes to accomplish, and the virtues it fosters and the fruit it produces in the soul of him who practises it. To this part is subjoined an appendix which gives in detail the testimony of a number of holy persons to the favours they

have received through the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The third part deals with the practical side of this Devotion, suggesting a number of pious practices in its honour, quoting the sentiments expressed by the saints, which show how the adoration of the Sacred Heart is "no new invention," but has always been the object of the veneration of the saints.

Many books have been written since the time of Father Galliffet on the Devotion to the Sacred Heart, but they are all of them only a development of what he wrote respecting it. It would not be true to say that his book exhausts its subject, for its subject, being none else than the love of Jesus Christ for man, is simply inexhaustible. But it is, and ever will remain, the standard work on the subject, the one to which we must refer for the theological foundations and the historical origin and progress of the Devotion. It is beautifully written, full of solid piety, but free from any exaggerated or high-flown sentiment. It carries its own evidence of being the work of one who was himself inspired with an intense love for the Sacred Heart.

The image stamped on the cover of the book

is a copy of one of the earliest pictures of the Sacred Heart. It derives a special interest from the fact of its having been sent as a present to Blessed Margaret Mary in 1685 by her former Superior, the Mère Greyfié; and of the first Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart having been made before it by the Nuns of the Visitation.

INTRODUCTION.

It has been said that whereas in former times there were only two roads to Heaven, the road of innocence and the road of penance, in these later days a third has been discovered, the road of indulgence. Like most epigrams, this saying is a half truth. It cannot be denied that the treasure-house of the Church has been thrown open to the faithful under conditions which appear easy indeed as compared with the severe penances and rigorous discipline of the primitive ages of faith. No sinners wait humbly at the door of our sanctuaries begging for admittance when their months or years of expiation shall be over. No royal culprits kneel to receive the well-merited lashes at the tomb of the Apostles, or at the grave of one whose death they had caused. No public avowal of open scandals is required before readmission to Communion, the rigorous fast of times gone by has given place to a far easier rule, and dispensations can be had for the mere asking, a public discipline is almost unknown, and sackcloth and ashes have well-nigh

disappeared as instruments of penance. The most serious sins receive but a very moderate penance, Indulgences are bestowed with a continually increasing liberality, and the richest of them may be gained in return for pious works that none could call a burden.

The same spirit of indulgence appears in the favourite Devotions of modern days. The wonderful growth of the honour paid to Mary is the instinct of the child craving forgiveness and throwing itself into its mother's arms, that she may intercede for it and obtain for it forgiveness and exemption from punishment deserved. The greater prominence given to the patient, gentle, forbearing, amiable Spouse of Mary, St. Joseph, his elevation to be Patron of the Universal Church, his succession to St. John Baptist the saint of penance, in the popular devotions of the faithful, and his association to some extent in the honour paid his Immaculate Spouse, are all marks, perhaps also consequences of the growing tenderness of our Holy Mother the Church to her children as the ages roll on.

This change is one that is inexplicable to those outside the Church, and even some Catholics seem to regard it as a concession to the self-indulgent love of ease, the want of interest in the things of God, the weakened faith and

the cooling fervour of the last ages of the world. They believe that it is a concession necessary indeed, and inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, but yet to be regretted on account of the indication it affords of spiritual degeneracy, and of tepidity taking the place of the earnest enthusiasm of the primitive ages.

Yet such a view is a false and mistaken one. If the change that has taken place were the result of any diminution of the Catholic spirit, it would be reflected in the general tone of Catholic society, in the absence of the self-sacrificing charity of former days, in the lower standard in the lives both of clergy and laity, in an increase of vice and immorality, in a carelessness about religion or education, in a neglect of the poor, in a failing loyalty to the Holy See, in a lack of men and women ready to devote themselves to works of mercy, and in a falling off in the zeal of the active orders, and in the strict seclusion of the contemplatives. Yet so far has this been the case that it is impossible to read the records of the past without a feeling of thankfulness. It is true that Catholics are fewer, that large masses have fallen away from the Church, that the accessions have been few compared with those that we have lost, that in every country in the world save one, thousands and even tens of

thousands have been lost to the faith by the inroads of heresy or the dying out of belief amid the adverse influences around. But we may thank God that those that remain, speaking of the generality of the faithful, are more fervent: that persecution has either failed altogether, or at least has increased the fervour of those who have been loyal to God, and that if faith is now less widely spread, it is more rooted where it still abides.

The fact is that the road of penance has not really been changed for indulgence, but for another form of penance; less showy but more real; hidden from the eyes of those who look only at externals and at that which strikes the senses, but yet involving more complete self-sacrifice than ever; a penance which is spiritual rather than corporal; a penance which contains the lower forms of penance in something the same way in which the nature of an angel includes the nature of man; a penance which subjugates the soul directly rather than through the medium of the body, and requires a submission more difficult than the submission to long fasts and hair-shirts, and disciplines, and short commons, and cold, and weariness, and all the suffering from which our body shrinks. Not that it neglects these, or that they are put aside

as things of the past, but it regards them as secondary, not as primary, as the consequences flowing from the higher penance when occasion offers rather than as the means used to produce it.

This higher penance consists in the complete subjection of intellect and will, in poverty of spirit as distinguished from (though including, whenever it is possible) actual poverty; an unquestioning obedience to those who have authority to command rather than an obedience which reserves to itself the final decision and the ultimate right of judging wherever the written law does not bind.

This higher penance is more difficult than the external penance of earlier times, inasmuch as it involves a more utter sacrifice of that which man values more than aught else, his individual liberty. If any part of us is our true self, it is our will, and for this reason it is that to give it up in all things is of all forms of martyrdom the most difficult and the most meritorious, because including all others. The members of the various Protestant sects will work with indefatigable zeal; they will give up money, time, comforts, position, for a cause that they have at heart, but they cannot surrender their will as a complete sacrifice to God. The Indian fakir

will practise unheard of mortifications and austerities, he will treat his body not only as a slave, but as an enemy to be tortured and persecuted in every possible way, but self-love still remains unbroken. Many a fanatic will court death, but no fanatic will court that absolute subjection which is completely and in all things dependent on God. If he courts dependence at all, it is dependence on a creature for its own sake, not on the Creator or on those who are His earthly representatives. The Catholic spirit alone makes of self a holocaust to God, and loves dependence with so fond an affection that it is never satisfied until it has taken upon itself a yoke of dependence as complete and as absolute as God's grace enables it to bear. The old man's staff, carried whithersoever he to whom it belongs may choose to bear it; the dead body, which permits itself to be moved at the will of those in whose possession it may be; the blind man, led on without knowing and without caring whither he goes, so long as he is conscious that the hand that leads him is the hand of one to whose charge he has been given by his Father in Heaven—these are the models which the modern spirit of penance puts before itself for its imitation. Its motto is the words of St. Paul: "Henceforth I live; now not I, but Christ

lives in me." And the practical test that it gives of the life of personal ambition and of the indulgence of self having been changed for the life of Christ within the soul, is—not long prayers, though dearly it loves to pray, nor active zeal, though it is on fire with the love of souls, nor rigorous austerities, though it is insatiate in its love of suffering—but the love of obscurity, the desire to be lightly esteemed, the wish to be trodden under the feet of men for Jesus' sake, the willingness to surrender all its personal rights, and above all, a perfect abandonment of self into the hands of God, so as to accept with joy, dryness, desolation, sickness, inactivity, uselessness, if such be the blessed will of Him into whose holy keeping it has committed its all and its very self.

But why should we say that this is the spirit of modern Christianity rather than of that which shone brightly through the ages of Faith? We do not say so. We only say that it comes out more into relief in these latter days—that it is the characteristic virtue which of necessity sets itself into opposition with the characteristic vice of modern days. In early and mediæval times the prevalent vices were tyranny, lawlessness, oppression, avarice, rapine, lust, injustice, cruelty; in the present day many of those have dis-

appeared, or at least taken comely drapery to hide their naked deformity, and all of them keep out of sight and do not venture to appear in public as of old. But in their place, or rather as their protector and friend, has entered in pride, and its carefully-veiled associates—false independence, dislike of submission, vaulting ambition, which is never satisfied until it takes the first place and is made like to the Most High, cultivated, cynical, well-bred selfishness. This new assemblage is not half as gross or revolting in appearance. There is none of the coarseness or brutality which characterized mediæval vices, but it is far more deadly, more incurable, more directly opposed to the spirit of Him whose leading characteristic was that He was meek and humble of Heart. To meet the new vices there is therefore required a new virtue, or rather there is required a greater development of that virtue which is the root and foundation of all the virtues, the virtue of Him who humbled Himself and became obedient. Humility, with its brothers in Christ, obedience, forbearance, meekness, resignation, contentment, abandonment of self—these are the virtues which are to encounter the modern vices and to be the peculiar characteristic of modern sanctity.

Now it is these virtues which are the special lesson taught by the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is unnecessary for us to remind our readers that this is no more a really new devotion than the virtues of which we have been speaking were really new virtues. It is really identical with a devotion to God Incarnate, and therefore dates from before the creation of the world, if at least the account given by many theologians of the Fall of the Angels is correct. They tell us that the occasion of their revolt was the Revelation to them of the future Incarnation of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity and the demand made by Almighty God of their homage and adoration of the Sacred Humanity of the Word made Flesh. Satan and his rebel crew refused to worship the Human Body which their God was to take to Himself, as an act derogatory to their Angelic dignity. Michael and his loyal host offered the joyful tribute of their adoring love to the Nature of Christ, made, though it was in its human aspect, "a little lower than the Angels." What else was this but the earliest devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ, which is but an epitome of all that belongs to His Sacred Humanity in virtue of the indwelling Deity? It was an act of humility virtually

identical with that which every good Catholic performs when He cries aloud, "Heart of Jesus, have compassion on me. Jesus, meek and humble of Heart, make my heart like unto Thy Heart." On the other hand, the sin of the rebel Angels corresponded far more nearly to the vices of our modern "leaders of Thought," and to the false independence which is gathering strength day by day among those who follow in their wake, than it does to the grosser sins and more open iniquities which prevailed in the less civilized days of our Catholic forefathers.

It is not our task to trace the gradual rise of the devotion or the steps that led up to the systematized form of it that dates from the Revelations of our Lord to Blessed Margaret Mary. This has been done many times over, and the history is familiar to our pious readers. But the connection of Father Galliffet, the author of the present work, with the devotion and the prominent part he took in spreading it over the world is not so generally known, and as some acquaintance with it adds not a little to the interest of the present work, we will add a few words respecting his life and labours on its behalf.

In the house where Father Galliffet, after his novitiate was over, made his studies of classics

and philosophy, it happened that Father de la Colombière was Spiritual Father. This was in 1680 when Blessed Margaret Mary was still alive. From Father de la Colombière he learned the first lesson of devotion to the Sacred Heart. When his studies were over he was sent to make his Tertianship, or third year of probation, before his last vows, at the Jesuit house in Lyons. According to the custom of the Society, he went with the other young Fathers to tend the sick in the hospital. There he caught a malignant fever, which brought him to the point of death. The physicians had given him over, he had lost consciousness, his agony had begun, and those present were expecting him each moment to draw his last breath. While he was in this state, one of the other Fathers who had a great reputation for sanctity and was praying before the Blessed Sacrament, was inspired to make a vow on Father Galliffet's behalf that he, Father Galliffet, should, if he recovered, employ the rest of his life in spreading the devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To the astonishment of the physicians, he from that moment began to mend. When told of the vow made for him, he joyfully adopted it as his own and set to work to fulfil it. The perusal of Blessed Margaret Mary's autobiography kindled his zeal

still more. In 1723, sent to Rome as assistant for France, he gave all his leisure time to this great work. In 1726 he published his first book on the subject, *De Cultu Sacrosancti Cordis Dei ac Domini nostri Jesu Christi*, in which he showed how the germ of the devotion is found in the writings of all the saints, and especially of St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, St. Laurence Justinian, St. Gertrude, and St. Mechtilde. He discusses the devotion from a theological point of view, and shows its solidity, and traces its progress since the revelations made to Blessed Margaret Mary. He concludes by laying at the feet of the Pope a petition on the part of the whole Order of the Visitation, of a large number of bishops and of priests, and the faithful generally without number, for the institution of a Feast of the Sacred Heart with Mass and Office, for the whole of Christendom. The application was rejected, and Benedict XIV., as Promoter of the Faith, opposed it. This opposition was, however, purely official, and he himself rejoiced in its after success.

Leaving Rome in 1732, Father Galliffet returned to France and there continued to work with indefatigable zeal in behalf of the sacred cause to which he had devoted himself. He translated his book into French, adding to it and

improving it in many ways. Several editions of it appeared, one at Lyons in 1733, another at Avignon in 1734, and a third at Nancy in 1745, besides several posthumous editions. The present translation is taken from the edition of 1745.

Father Galliffet was not satisfied with employing his pen only in promoting the devotion to the Sacred Heart. In 1743 no less than 702 Confraternities of the Sacred Heart had been established. The devotion in 1745 had spread throughout France, Italy, Germany, Spain, and had found its way to China and India. It met with the most violent opposition from the Jansenists, who gave the names of "Cordioles," "Alacoquistes," and even idolaters, to those who practised the devotion. It was condemned by the schismatical Synod of Pistoia in 1786, but the controversy was put an end to by the authoritative approbation granted to it by Pius VI. in his Bull, *Auctorem Fidei*, of August 28, 1794.

From that day to this it has steadily advanced and spread: not indeed without great opposition, for it has been the object of the blasphemy of heretics and of the cold contempt of disloyal children of the Church. But wherever faith is fervent and love abounds, wherever Jesus is the object of loyal devotion and Mary is honoured

with the fond affections which never can be severed from love to her Son, there the Sacred Heart of Jesus receives an ever increasing homage and adoration, which through God's mercy will continue to increase as long as the world shall last.

R. F. CLARKE.

ON THE EXCELLENCE OF THE DEVOTION TO THE ADORABLE HEART OF JESUS.

Part the First.

On the origin, progress, and nature of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN OF THIS DEVOTION.

As from divers portions of this work we shall see that many saints in past ages have had the most marked and tender sentiments of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we shall readily admit that the devotion is not new—at least in substance. Nevertheless, as up to the present time this devotion has been unknown to the multitude of the faithful, and as in the Church there appeared no external practice of it, it may chance to be regarded as new by a great number of persons who will desire to know how and through what means it has now spread. Besides, as the form in which it is now practised is really new, we may be asked whence it comes and who is its author? It is only fair to satisfy these

demands, and we have thought it expedient to begin by so doing. We do it the more willingly, that the mere recital of what has occurred in this respect is calculated to render this devotion most acceptable to the faithful. The devotion to the Sacred Heart has for its founder Jesus Christ Himself. He it is Who revealed it, ordained its institution, explained its nature, taught its practice, and prescribed the form and the method of it; finally, it was He Himself Who promised to shed His graces upon those who adopt the devotion. This fact is now so universally acknowledged, that well-informed people cannot reasonably doubt it. Nevertheless, this point being essential to our subject, I cannot refrain from stating it here briefly for the instruction and edification of those who are ignorant of it. But before entering into these details, we must pause for a moment to make one most important observation, viz., that special revelations have been one of the means most commonly employed by the Divine Wisdom in all ages for the carrying out of Its designs. There are in the Church great numbers of pious works to be found throughout Christendom, which have had the same origin. This has been the case with nearly all the religious orders, as appears in the lives of their founders, and in the annals of each order. In the pressing needs of the Church, whenever extraordinary help has been necessary, whether for its extension throughout the universe, or for its defence and support against the efforts of its enemies, or to strengthen it

against persecutions, heresies, schisms, and the corruption of morals, special revelations have constantly been employed. Ecclesiastical history is full of such instances, every age furnishes them, and it is plain that hardly anything of importance has occurred in Christendom without God having made use of this means to manifest His providence over His Church.

But, to mention one fact, a thing bearing more directly on our subject, how many festivals, whether common to the whole Church or peculiar to certain provinces, have owed their birth to similar revelations? For instance, the feasts of the Invention and Exaltation of the Holy Cross, of Our Lady ad Nives, of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, of her Nativity, her Visitation, those of the Rosary and the Scapular, the Apparition of St. Michael, the Finding of the Relics of St. Stephen. How many other festivals peculiar to different kingdoms and cities owe their institution to this same cause?

Among these numerous feasts, there is one of great solemnity, so appropriate to our subject that to pass it over in silence would leave our work incomplete. I allude to the feast of Corpus Christi. Between the institution of this great festival and that of the Sacred Heart there is so striking a resemblance that, after having considered attentively the origin and the progress of both—the opposition which they met with, the means which God used to spread them, and all the other circumstances attending their institution—I cannot help being struck with this resem-

blance; and I cannot, as it appears to me, more strongly dispose minds in favour of what I have to say later on, than by drawing attention at starting to this comparison. It appears from well-authenticated records of ecclesiastical history, first, that the feast of Corpus Christi took its origin from a revelation to an individual. This fact is attested even in the very Bull of the institution of the feast. Pope Urban IV. speaks thus: "While We were yet in an inferior order of the priesthood, We were aware that there had been a revelation to the effect that this feast would one day be celebrated throughout the entire Church." Secondly, it appears that this institution encountered great opposition in its commencement. A short account of this will not be unwelcome to my readers. I therefore give it in a few words, drawn from the fuller accounts of the historians of that time.

In the year 1210 there was near the town of Liege a monastery of nuns, which the two celebrated orders, of Citeaux and of Prémontré, each claimed as their own. In this monastery there lived in silence and retirement a virgin named Juliana, since canonized. The Roman Martyrology commemorates her on the 5th of April. God, Who is always pleased to reveal His secrets to simple and innocent souls, and Who generally employs for His greatest works the most feeble instruments, having resolved to establish the feast of Corpus Christi, till then unknown in the Church, deigned to reveal His design to this holy religious, telling her at the same time that it

was through her instrumentality He intended to accomplish His design. The humble virgin, struck by the novelty of the undertaking, and still more by the difficulty attending its execution, both on account of her own weakness and the apparent impossibility of her labouring at it, confined as she was within a monastery, for a long time mistrusted this revelation. God, however, still urged her interiorily to make known what was passing in her soul. But she dared not, and history affirms that for twenty years she resisted this interior impulse. But at last, conquered by the dread of offending God, and by remorse which left her no rest, she resolved to reveal everything to her confessor, a canon of Liege, a prudent, pious man, and one who had the gift of reading souls. He had long known the virtue of Juliana, and assisted by the Divine light which God never fails to communicate to His ministers on these occasions, he became convinced that the Holy Spirit was working in her soul, and that the revelation was true. Nevertheless, that he might act with all proper precaution in an affair of such importance, he determined to consult other learned and devout persons. Their view coincided with his own. They decided that the revelation came from God, and resolved to labour together to carry it out. But no sooner was the rumour spread that a new feast was in contemplation in honour of the Body of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, than strong protests were raised in Liege, both against the feast itself and against its supposed authors; so

that this feast of Corpus Christi, now so solemn and so universal throughout the Church: this feast, recognized as so just and holy; this feast so sweet, so consoling, so dear to all the faithful, was not thus regarded at its commencement: on the contrary, it was despised, cried down, and opposed. The historian of that time declares that it appeared in the world as a sign of contradiction, and that there arose a host of people who waged relentless war against it; and he further observes that in the same community (the Chapter Clergy of Liege), amongst which God had chosen the most ardent defenders of this new devotion, He also permitted its most determined opponents.

Juliana's revelation was looked upon as a delusion —the Saint was regarded as a sham devotee, a dangerous spirit who was bringing trouble on the Church. She was shamefully treated, being even forced to leave her convent. Those who would have defended her were treated as weak minds who yielded credence to the visions of a deluded woman; insults were heaped upon them; they were made the butt of jests, and objects of ridicule and contempt. The scandal was so great, that no one dared either to act or to speak openly in favour of the new devotion. These critics were not without apparently good reasons for this manifestion of their feelings. They opposed the festival as a novelty, as useless, as singular. All novelties in religion are, they said, dangerous. We are neither more enlightened nor

more pious than our forefathers; why should we deviate from their customs? Why should not what sufficed them for the honour of God and their own sanctification, satisfy us? This proposed festival is moreover useless; it is already celebrated on Thursday in Holy Week, and every day at Mass a commemoration is made of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament: where then is the necessity for a special festival for the same object? The very name given to the feast of the Body of Jesus Christ was calculated to furnish weapons to those who made use of every pretext to oppose it. They said then of the feast of the Body of Jesus Christ, what has been said in our own days of that of His Sacred Heart. This title suggests to the mind the Flesh alone of Jesus Christ, which is simply a material object. Besides, by the institution of a particular festival for the Body of Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is as it were divided. He is entire in the Sacrament: He might therefore be worshipped as such, and not in parts. Finally, if there is to be a feast of the Body, why not one also of the Soul, of the Divinity, of the Divine Person? Thus the new devotion was opposed by every conceivable means, and with inflexible obstinacy. But while men were thus opposing the designs of God, His wisdom was none the less surely leading them to the desired end. The Bishop of Liege was the first of whom God made use for this purpose. He approved in 1246 of the introduction of the new devotion into his diocese. It spread by

degrees into the neighbouring provinces, and, later, into those more distant, everywhere meeting with opposition, until Urban IV. proposed it to the whole Church in 1264 by a special Bull: and this even met with opposition in many places. At last, Clement V. having confirmed the Bull of Urban in the Council of Vienna, 1311, the opposition ceased, and the Church enjoyed peaceful possession of this beautiful festival: but it was only, as we have seen, after a contest of nearly eighty years.

Let us now return to our subject. It was necessary to linger a little over this narrative, because it contains a natural and exact counterpart of that which has occurred in our days regarding the feast of the Sacred Heart. The reader may judge for himself. There was in the little town of Paray-le-Monial, situated in Charolais, in the diocese of Autun, a convent of the Visitation of our Lady. In it there lived a young girl, named Margaret Alacoque, who had consecrated herself to God at the age of twenty, hidden and unknown to all the world, but in the most intimate communion with her God. She died there, in the odour of sanctity, in 1690, at the age of forty. Her life was a model of the most exalted virtue. God showered on her His most precious gifts and most rarely bestowed favours. We have on this subject the written testimony of her Superiors, both male and female. But we have, moreover, an account, written under obedience in her own hand, of the graces which she received from God. This will be found in the

second volume of the work mentioned below. Those who read it will be convinced that this holy virgin deserves a place amongst the most cherished of Christ's spouses.

The Bishop of Soissons, afterwards Archbishop of Sens, an illustrious defender of the Church, considered the life of this servant of God so full of wonders, that he thought fit, even in the midst of his important occupations, to employ his leisure and eloquent pen in giving it to the public. It is impossible to read it without forming a most exalted idea of the sanctity of this chosen soul. It was this innocent virgin whom our Lord chose to initiate the devotion to His Sacred Heart. To fit her for the accomplishment of this design, He began by making known to her in prayer, through the grace of an infused light, the excellence of this adorable Heart, its grandeur, its perfections, its riches, its virtues, its sufferings. The lights she received on this subject ravished her with admiration, and so transported her with intense love, that she was beside herself. She felt herself consumed with a vehement and continual desire to see this Divine Heart known, honoured, and glorified. Her whole inner self was absorbed in this sweet and adorable object. She desired, she yearned for nothing but its glory; she thought only of the means of promoting it, and would gladly have spoken of nothing else. Her heart being thus prepared for the grace for which God destined it, Jesus Christ appeared to her one day, made known to her

His design of establishing in His Church a feast in honour of His Sacred Heart, and added that He had made choice of herself for the carrying out of this design. The greater was the joy felt by this holy woman on hearing that the Heart of Jesus was to be glorified as her heart desired, the greater was her consternation on learning the means which our Lord intended to employ for this end. Her natural timidity, her youth, the retirement in which she lived from the world and all creatures made her regard it as an impossibility. She dared not open her mind to any one on the matter, and she resisted for several years the interior impulses which moved her to do so. Yet God urged her on and gave her no reprieve. The reproaches she received from Him cut her to the heart, and made her fear lest there was sin in her resistance. God sent her at this juncture a director worthy of her confidence, to whom she resolved at last to open the depths of her soul. This director was Father Claude de la Colombière, of the Society of Jesus, whom a special providence had lately conducted to Paray. He was a man of great virtue, and one whom God had endowed with a rare power of discernment of spirits for the guidance of souls. This Father is known throughout Europe in these days by his sermons, which were published after his death, and which are filled with that heavenly sweetness which appertains only to those men who are themselves filled with the Spirit of God. During his lifetime he was looked upon as a model of

religious perfection. He was sent by his Superiors into England as chaplain to her Royal Highness the Duchess of York, afterwards Queen of England. In the midst of his zealous labours, after a residence of two years in London, he was arrested and put in prison from hatred to the Catholic religion, and had it not been out of consideration for the Duchess, whom he served, he would have shared the fate of five of his brethren, who were condemned to death —a happy fate, his escape from which Father Colombière regretted all his life. In his case, his enemies contented themselves with banishing him from the kingdom, and he was obliged to return to France. The hardships of his mission and of his imprisonment had exhausted his strength, he contracted a disease of the chest which, after three years of suffering and languor, carried him off, in the town of Paray, where he had gone for change of air. He died in the odour of sanctity, at the age of forty-one, in the year 1682. After his death circumstances came to light which greatly increased the high idea already entertained of his sanctity. Some of these will be found in the summary of his life, which was published as an introduction to his sermons, but nothing makes him so well known to us as the Journal of his Retreats, which was published in the collection of his works.*

It is impossible to read it without admiring the

* Œuvres du P. de la Colombière. 7 vol. in 12. Avignon, 1832.

purity of his soul, and the grandeur of the sentiments with which grace inspired him. In particular, may be noticed a vow which he had made to observe strictly all the rules which St. Ignatius had imposed on his Society, and in which the holy founder has included all religious perfection. Those who know in detail the virtues and holy practices comprehended in these rules, the vigilance and death to self which their rigid observance exacts, will perhaps understand the heroism in regard to holiness entailed by the faithful performance of such an engagement. Now, we know that Father de la Colombière carried it out with an exactness and a fidelity which drew forth the admiration of all those who witnessed it. We who write this, and had the happiness of living with him, and of being under his direction during the last years of his life, can ourselves bear witness to this fact.

It was this director, so prudent and so holy, whom Jesus Christ sent by a special providence to Sister Margaret, to be the confidant of the graces she received, and particularly of everything which concerned the devotion to the Sacred Heart. No doubt the reader will like to hear from Father de la Colombière himself the circumstances under which this charge was laid upon him. Here is what he left in his own handwriting in the Journal of his Retreats,* it occurs in the account of that which he made in London in 1677.

* See page 92 in the seventh volume of the new edition of his works, quoted above.

"While finishing this retreat, and full of confidence in the mercy of my God, I made a resolution to bring about by every possible means, all that my adorable Master prescribed to me, with regard to His Precious Body in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar, where I believe Him to be really and truly present. Touched with compassion for those blind ones, who will not humble themselves and believe in this great and ineffable Mystery, I would willingly shed my blood, O my beloved Redeemer! to persuade them of this truth, which I believe and which I openly profess in these countries where it is made a point of honour to doubt Thy Real Presence in this august Sacrament. I feel great consolation in making acts of faith many times during the day, in the Real Presence of Thy adorable Body under the species of bread and wine. My heart expands each time that I set myself to make acts of faith on the truths taught by the Roman Church, which is the only real Church, and out of which there is no hope of salvation. My heart, I say, at such times, expands and is filled with a sweetness which I enjoy and receive from the mercy of my God, without being able to explain it. You are very good, O my God! to communicate Yourself with so much sweetness to the most worthless and ungrateful of Your creatures, and the most unworthy of Your servants. May God be eternally blessed and praised! I recognized that it was the will of God that I should serve Him by promoting the accom-

plishment of His wishes regarding the devotion which He has inspired to a certain person with whom He held intimate communion and on behalf of whom He deigned to make use of my weakness. I have already suggested it to many people in England; and I have written to France and begged one of my friends to endeavour to introduce it where he is living. It will be useful there; and the great number of chosen souls in that community convinces me that its practice in that holy house will be very acceptable to God. Why cannot I, my God, be everywhere, and make known all that You expect from Your servants and Your friends? God, then, having revealed Himself to this individual, whom we have reason to believe one after His own Heart, in consequence of the great graces which He has conferred upon her, she opened her heart to me, and I made her put in writing all that she told me, and I have myself willingly written it in the Journal of my Retreats, because it was the will of the good God to make use of my feeble help in the execution of this design.

"'Being in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament one day during the octave,' says this holy soul, 'I received from my God marvellous proofs of His love. Moved with the desire to make some return and to give love for love, He said to me: "Thou canst not give Me a greater proof of love than by doing what I have so often asked of thee," and then, showing me His Divine Heart, He added: "Behold this Heart which

has so loved men, that it has spared nothing, even to the exhausting and wearing itself out, to manifest to them its love; and in recompense, I receive for the most part only ingratitude, contempt, irreverence, sacrilege, and the indifference which they show Me in this Sacrament of love. But what is worse, hearts consecrated to Me treat Me thus. It is for this reason that I ask that the first Friday after the octave of the Blessed Sacrament should be dedicated as a special festival to do honour to My Heart by devout acts of reparation and satisfaction by communicating on that day to expiate the indignities received whilst exposed on the altar; and I promise thee that My Heart shall expand in order to shed abundantly the influence of its Divine love on all those who shall thus render it honour."

"'"But, Lord! to whom dost Thou address Thyself? to a miserable creature, a poor sinner, whose unworthiness alone would suffice to prevent the accomplishment of Thy designs. There are so many generous souls more worthy to execute Thy will."

"'"Oh, simple one, knowest thou not that I make use of the weakest to confound the strong, and that ordinarily, it is through the most insignificant and humble of heart that I manifest My power, in order that they may take no credit to themselves."

"'"Give me then," I answered, "the means to perform what Thou commandest."

"'Then He added: "Apply to My servant N. and

tell him from Me to do all that lays in his power to establish this devotion, and to give this consolation to My Divine Heart. Let him not be discouraged by the difficulties he will encounter, they will not be wanting; but he must know that he is all powerful who distrusts himself and confides entirely in Me."'"

Father de la Colombière was too well acquainted with the holiness of the person who gave him this writing to be able to entertain any doubt of her sincerity; and the light which God communicated to him regarding His Divine work in this chosen soul, left him no choice but to receive this as a command from Jesus Christ Himself. From henceforth he made it a law, as he declares, to leave nothing undone to bring about God's design. He could not, it is true, further it much himself, partly because he left France for England shortly afterwards, partly because after his return he only survived three years and was always in an infirm state of health, and partly also, in fine, on account of the opposition raised to the practice of this devotion, which rendered prudence and great management necessary to avoid causing difficulty. But God did not leave His work undone when He called His servant to Himself; He even made use of him after His death, as we shall see in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II.

PROGRESS OF THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART.

FATHER DE LA COLOMBIERE having died, his works were given to the world. The Journal of his Retreats was considered so edifying and so beautiful that it was printed with his other writings. God, by a special providence in keeping with His design, had permitted that the Father should insert the revelation of which we have spoken in this Journal. It was therefore printed with the Journal, and was the first means taken by our Saviour to make known not only the revelation, but also the devotion to His Sacred Heart. He raised up for the same object shortly afterwards another Father of the same Society (Father John Croiset), since celebrated for his many excellent works of piety, whom He inspired with the same zeal. He led him to Paray, where he became acquainted with Sister Margaret, who took him so completely into her confidence, that this holy woman to the day of her death kept up a correspondence with him as the director of her conscience, confiding to him, with entire openness of heart, the secrets of her soul, and the graces she received. It was this new director whom Jesus Christ had selected to write

on the devotion to His Sacred Heart. His first work was a little book on this subject. This essay was so well received that in a short time many editions of it appeared. This success encouraged the author to compose a larger work, in which the subject was fully entered into. This second book was as well received as the former one; it circulated everywhere; it passed through many editions, and was translated into several languages. By this means the devotion to the Sacred Heart became known throughout many provinces, and people began to practise it. But this first success did not last—at least not without interruption. The devil saw it with regret; his fury was roused; there arose against the feast of the Sacred Heart the same opposition which he had raised against that of our Lord's Sacred Body. Opposition of all sorts burst forth; persecution was active, and those even who wished to establish or practise this devotion were branded as a sect likely to cause trouble to the Church. Everything, even the very name of the devotion, became obnoxious, and the Heart of Jesus could not be named without giving offence to many. O God! O gentle Saviour of men! what was there then in that sacred name that could incite so much hatred? what, O adorable Master, could be found in Thy Heart, so noble, so holy, so grand, so sweet, that could thus offend the souls of Thy faithful? and through what strange blindness could a devotion bearing a name so sweet and so Divine become through that very name an

object of contempt and aversion to Thy children? We are astonished in these days that the feast of Corpus Christi should have suffered in its commencement so terrible a persecution; equal astonishment will be felt in days to come that the feast of the Sacred Heart should have been exposed to a similar one. But as the opposition raised to the feast of the Body of Christ did not prevent the accomplishment of God's designs, so the storm raised against the devotion to His Sacred Heart did not arrest its progress. There were, it is true, at first but a very few interior souls who received it, and they contented themselves with practising it in secret, but this number insensibly increased. Those who loved it made it known to others; one friend communicated it to another; one devout soul to her companions; a confessor to his penitents. The books circulated made their mark; truth, little by little, got the ascendency; prejudices died away; good sense gained the day, so that in a few years people of all classes and conditions embraced the new devotion, and found in it consolation. It made its way more particularly in religious houses, as it is in these sacred asylums that Jesus Christ ordinarily collects together interior souls. It was there especially that the Heart of this Divine Bridegroom became the object of the worship and the tenderness of His beloved spouses.

In many convents they did not content themselves with honouring this Divine Heart once a year; they renewed the feast by a monthly Communion for this

intention, and established for the same object daily practices of devotion, deputing the discharge of the same to certain religious in the name of the community. The devotion thus gaining ground from day to day, many of the Bishops approved it in their dioceses. Under their authority were established confraternities dedicated to the Heart of Jesus Christ, and the Holy See honoured them with the Indulgences bestowed on those confraternities most especially authorized by the Church; this gave a great impetus to the zeal of the faithful. On this occasion were printed many little books on the practice of this devotion, which were circulated everywhere. Images of the Sacred Heart now became general; pictures of it were exposed in the churches for public veneration, and chapels and churches were erected in its honour, and the festival began to be celebrated in those places consecrated to it with great pomp and a large concourse of people. After a short period there was not a considerable town in France in which this feast was not celebrated. From France, where the devotion took its birth, it passed into neighbouring countries, and, later, into those more distant, with a success and a rapidity which could only have been the effect of God's hand. In less than thirty-eight years* it spread throughout France, Flanders, Germany, Poland, Bohemia, Lithuania, in the principal towns of Italy, Rome, Naples, Milan, Turin, Genoa, Palermo, Messina, &c. It penetrated beyond the seas to the

* From about the year 1693 to 1731.

further end of the globe, in China, Persia, the Indies, Syria, Canada, and in the American islands, so that, throughout all these different countries more than four hundred confraternities could be reckoned,* established in all sorts of churches, as well secular as regular, Metropolitan churches, cathedrals, collegiate churches, parish churches, hospitals, chapels, congregations, communities, religious orders of all kinds, men and women, as may be seen by the catalogue of confraternities which was published, a sufficient proof that the all-powerful hand of God was in this great work. While speaking of the progress made by the devotion to the Sacred Heart, we must not pass over in silence a most remarkable means, and bearing a Divine impress, of which God made use, some few years back, to make the devotion more known and to stir up the zeal of the faithful. In 1720, when the plague was devastating the most beautiful towns of Provence, and when rumours of the awful desolation of these towns were causing general consternation throughout the kingdom, God, in this terrible crisis—touching the people in the most tender point, viz., the preservation of their own lives and those of their children—suddenly inspired those afflicted towns to have recourse to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ as a refuge from His anger. We see them, one after another, seizing with avidity this means of deliverance.

* Father Galliffet wrote this in 1732, but in the edition of 1745, part ii. pp. 177, 178, he counts 702 confraternities—from 1693 to 1743; and how many have been established since that period.

The bishops and the magistrates united to place, by public vow, the town under the authority of the Sacred Heart. At the foot of the altars solemn engagements were made to render public honours every year to this adorable Heart, and to celebrate the festival in perpetuity with ceremonies which would testify to posterity their eternal gratitude. The pastorals and other authentic acts of the Archbishops and Bishops of Aix, Arles, Avignon, Marseilles, Toulon, have been printed in full, as also the consultations and vows made to God, as well by the Chapter of Aix as by the magistrates of Marseilles and Avignon. *There* may be seen with what piety and ardour people had recourse to the Heart of Jesus, that the Divine wrath might be appeased; it might almost be said that the design of God in sending this temporal scourge was to secure glory for the Heart of His Son, since truly its glory has been the result. Happy those towns which, without so terrible a chastisement, honour this Divine Heart, and take this sweet means of warding off the Divine vengeance deserved by their sins.

Before closing this chapter, we must not omit to mention that the Bishops of Provence were not the first who approved of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. The Archbishop of Lyons in 1718, before the commencement of the plague, prompted by a spirit of piety, and his anxiety to secure for his people this spiritual succour, established, by his pastoral of the 3rd of December, the feast of the Sacred Heart

throughout his diocese; and in 1721, when the plague was devastating Provence, and keeping the neighbouring provinces, and especially the town of Lyons, in continual alarms, this prudent prelate considered it his duty to meet the danger by another pastoral, confirming the first and insisting more earnestly that the feast of the Sacred Heart should be observed as a feast of obligation, with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. In 1692, the Archbishop of Besançon, Pierre de Grammont, one of the most pious prelates who ever ruled that diocese, approved this Devotion and granted an Indulgence of forty days to whoever should recite a prayer before an image of the Sacred Heart. Nay more, he established for the use of his diocese a special Mass for the feast of the Sacred Heart, and he caused it to be inserted in the Missal of his diocese, which differed from the Roman Missal. The Bishop of Langres, whose diocese adjoins that of Besançon, followed the example of his illustrious brother, and approved of the same Mass for his diocese. The Bishop of Coutances, in Normandy, François de Loménie de Brienne, had been beforehand with them all. The church of his Seminary was dedicated to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary in the year 1688. In it were celebrated separately and with great solemnity, the feasts of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and of Mary, with an octave and special Office.

There was established, under the title of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, a confraternity, which Pope

Clement X. had already authorized by a Bull of Indulgences, dated October 4, 1674, but first published in 1688. This Pope, in 1674, authorized the same devotion by six Briefs, granted at the instance of Father Eudes, the celebrated saintly missionary of Normandy, to the churches of his congregation, with the permission to institute confraternities under the title of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

About this time also, were commenced in the Order of St. Benedict in France, the two feasts of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, with Masses and special Offices, as appears by the collection of the new Offices of the Order, printed at Paris, in 1674, by Louis Billaine. The Friars Minor of the great province of France began from this time with the approbation of the Cardinal of Vendôme, the *Legate à latere*, to celebrate the feast with a special Office, as we may see at the end of their proper Office. To all these authorizations in favour of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, may be added: First, those of all the bishops who have permitted the nuns of Sainte Marie to celebrate the feast of this adorable Heart in their churches; for it is unquestionable that in almost all the churches of this order, so illustrious, so numerous, this feast is kept every year. Secondly, those of all the bishops who have instituted confraternities dedicated to the Sacred Heart in their dioceses. The number of these prelates already amounts to one hundred and twenty, as may be known by the towns in which these confraternities

are established. Lastly, we may add the authority of the Holy See, which has honoured with Briefs of Indulgences more than three hundred and sixty of these confraternities.*

Whoever will attentively consider all that has been related, will be convinced that so sudden and so general a progress can only be the effect of a particular Providence; more particularly if we reflect that the devotion to the Sacred Heart had not, on first starting, the help commonly accorded to other devotions, which being for the most part attached to religious bodies, find as many zealous protectors as there are subjects in the order, who make it their duty to publish and disseminate them. But the devotion to the Sacred Heart, belonging to no particular kingdom, to no particular diocese, and no power having taken it in hand to propagate it, we must admit that the astonishing progress it has made cannot be the work of men, but only of God. And indeed God alone, Who holds in His hands the hearts of men and bends them to His will, could inspire so many bishops, and so many people of all shades of opinion, with the will to embrace unanimously, and with so much ardour, a new and, up to that time, unheard-of devotion.

* Father Galliffet wrote this in 1732 or 1733. Since that period the number of prelates and confraternities have greatly increased.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE TRUTH OF THE REVELATION OF WHICH WE HAVE SPOKEN, AND THE BELIEF WHICH IS DUE TO SUCH EXTENUATING GRACES.

We shall show further on that devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is so solid in itself, that it does not require the support or help of revelation, yet, as nothing would be more likely to secure for it the respect and the love of the faithful, than so signal a mark of the Divine will, it is important to examine into the truth of the facts, and to give positive proof of them. This examination is the more necessary, as we live in an age when every day increases the number of these would-be freethinkers, who consider it meritorious to despise all that is related of these extraordinary graces—not only of what happens in our own days, but they consider themselves at liberty to extend their doubts to what is related of the saints of old and recognized by the Church.

I beg the reader who may feel himself in this disposition of mind, to weigh with attention the reflections which I am about to make in this chapter, and perhaps he may come to the conclusion that such freethinking is no proof of a strong mind, but rather of a weak one.

And to begin by the revelations made in former days to saints canonized by the Church, it will be easy to prove that we cannot without rashness, generally speaking, deny or doubt that these saints received veritable revelations, celestial visions, and other extraordinary graces. In order to prove this, I could, in the first place, make use of the reason drawn from the authority of the writers who recount these favours in the lives of the saints which they have left us. All ecclesiastical history, from the first ages of the Church, is full of them. The testimony of these historians, of whose good faith we cannot doubt, men, for the most part known for honesty, prudence, and often of well-known sanctity, learned moreover in mystical and spiritual matters; this testimony, I say, may well counterbalance the authority of the unbelieving minds with whom we wage war—men, ordinarily speaking, quite ignorant of the interior life of grace, and often of loose morals. I could moreover lay great stress on the feeling generally entertained towards these revelations, on the authority of the Church, which recognizes them, and which has frequently approved of them in various saints, after a rigorous examination made during the progress of their canonization, a proof which will ever be convincing to the true children of the Church. But I put aside these considerations and confine myself now to a palpable argument, which has always appeared to me unanswerable, viz., the writings of the saints which have remained to us, and

which contain numbers of these extraordinary graces; to speak only of women, who are generally looked upon as more open to illusion, we cannot, I say, reasonably doubt that, for example, St. Teresa, St. Gertrude, St. Mecthildis, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, and other similar saints, received from God veritable revelations. But before entering more fully into the demonstration of this truth, I must observe that it is not my intention to canonize indiscriminately all which has been written of, or by these saints. There are, on this subject, two extremes to avoid: on the one hand, to believe everything too easily, and on the other, a determination to believe nothing. It must be admitted that the saints themselves can be, and are sometimes deceived—it is the privilege of inspired sacred writers alone to be never deceived. For this reason, we should always examine carefully what is written by men, however holy they may be, and submit it to the judgment of the wise and prudent, and especially to that of our ecclesiastical superiors and of the Church. In dealing with revelations and other extraordinary graces, such as miracles, it would be rash and even impious to deny or call in question all miracles on the principle that there are false miracles, as also it would be rash and impious to deny indiscriminately that there are real revelations, because there have been some that are false. Sound doctrine takes the middle course, following the rule laid down by St. Paul: "Despise not prophecies; prove and examine all

things, hold fast that which is good."* With this observation, I return to the evidence to which I mean to confine myself, as follows.

We possess the writings of many holy women; we know they were written under advice and obedience. These writings are filled with accounts of revelations, heavenly visions, and other extraordinary graces, which these saints declared they received from God. Upon this the following line of argument suggests itself to the mind. To call in question the reality of these graces, we must either deny that the writings we possess are really the work of these saints, or, if we admit this, we are driven to one of two conclusions—either that they have designedly written what is false, or that without any wish to deceive, they have themselves been deceived, and have passed off delusions as Divine graces. Whichever side is taken, piety and reason are equally wounded. If you deny the writings which bear the name of these saints to be really their work, you shock common sense. What! deny that St. Teresa wrote her life, and the other works that we have from her pen! He who would throw a doubt on so unquestionable and well authenticated a fact, would render himself as ridiculous as if he were to deny that St. Teresa ever lived—the first fact being no less certain than the second. But if we can prudently deny neither the writings nor their author, we are reduced to the necessity of saying either that the saint knowingly wrote what was false,

* 1 Thess. v. 20, 21.

or that she was deceived and deluded—two strange extremes. To say that she lied, is to pronounce her a hypocrite and a reprobate; to say that she was deluded is to declare her to have been possessed or to be a visionary, for such delusions can only have been produced by imagination or by the demon. Could it be a delusion of the devil? What! this Saint whom the Church reveres as one of the most cherished of Christ's spouses, to have been all her life deceived by devils, that she took the deceptions and illusions of these impure spirits for the graces and the caresses of Jesus Christ! Can a Christian mind accept such blasphemy? You will say, It was not the devil that deceived her; she may have been deceived by her own imagination. This view is less horrible than the first, but hardly less impious. The Saint would no longer be a hypocrite, but she would be a wild ranter; for what greater folly could there be than to mistake simple imaginations for actual favours from Heaven, and to represent idle dreams as celestial visions? What could be more absurd than to fancy she received visits from Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints; that she conversed with them, asked them questions, listened to them, as she asserts, when all the time nothing of the kind occurred, and she was simply deluded by a heated imagination. Who among the faithful can persuade himself that St. Teresa, St. Gertrude, St. Catherine of Siena, and so many other saints who were the admiration of their age, passed their lives in a state

of perpetual raving? I say perpetual, because it is a remarkable circumstance that we have not to deal with occasional appearances, or with a state of mind which only lasted a few hours or days, or during some particular age; we are dealing with an habitual disposition and a sequence of events which lasted their whole life, and in all ages.

"We cannot then excuse them of extravagant folly." But who is the wise man who would dare so to judge these Saints? I do not say openly, for such a man would be "anathema," but even secretly, in the depth of his own heart. I feel sure that whoever will fully weigh these reflections, and all that we have said in their favour, will come to the conclusion that it tells more for these Saints and their writings than all the arguments brought forward by incredulity. But what are these reasons? Let us examine them to know what they are worth. The unbelievers with whom we are treating are not in the habit of giving reasons; they confine themselves to the natural feeling produced on their minds by the recital of these extraordinary graces; they are so overwhelmed by their novelty and the little experience they have in all that is mystical, that they cannot help regarding them as purely visionary. For example, when they hear that Jesus Christ presented His Heart to St. Catherine of Siena, that He took up His abode in that of St. Gertrude, that He imprinted on the heart of Blessed Clare de Montefalco the instruments of His Passion, that a Seraphim pierced the

heart of St. Teresa with a burning dart, and other similar favours, of which the lives of the saints are full—all this appears to them like the delusions of an overheated imagination, to which a man of common sense would never yield belief. And this sentiment which they experience takes the place of reason with them. They despise everything which they cannot understand. But to return to my argument. I reply thus: Since the reason for disbelieving these graces is founded on their improbability, I ask, does it appear to you probable that the Saints we have named should be hypocrites or impious—that they lied, or were mad or extravagant, or that they were victims of delusion, or were possessed by the spirits of darkness (if it was indeed by them they were deceived)? I ask, whether it is credible that the directors of these spouses of Jesus Christ—men, holy in themselves, and masters learned in the spiritual life, should also be deceived, and not able to distinguish during the space of so many years between the illusions of the devil or the effects of imagination, and the operations of the Holy Ghost? I ask if it appears to you probable that the Church herself should have fallen into error by placing amongst the saints, and pronouncing full of Divine wisdom, women, who, on account of the ravings of an excited imagination, hardly deserved to be considered reasonable beings? And yet, whoever persists in holding the opinion which we are condemning, must accept all these absurdities and impieties.

I come now to another reflection which cuts away the ground from incredulity, and it is that we find nothing in the writings of these saints which ought to appear beyond belief to a Christian who has meditated, however imperfectly, on what the love of Jesus Christ is capable of towards men, and on what it has already done for them. For myself, I confess that when I begin to meditate on the favours with which this amiable Saviour has loaded us, and particularly on the mystery of the Eucharist, I confess, I say, that all which I read or hear of the graces received by the saintly soul, however extraordinary it may be, no longer appears incredible; and I am persuaded that any one who will reflect, even casually, on this mystery, will think as I do. I therefore beg of those who have so much difficulty in believing what the saints have written of celestial graces, to cast a glance on the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and to tell us which appears to them most incredible and beyond human reason—that Jesus Christ should give His Heart to a St. Gertrude or to a St. Catherine, His spouses gifted with angelic purity, or that this same Jesus should give His Body, whole and entire, to be eaten by an ordinary man, a sinner?

To give full force to this consideration, let us suppose for one moment that the Sacrament of the Eucharist had never been instituted, and that this marvel of Divine love were unknown to the Church; under such circumstances, if some saintly soul, in recounting the graces she received from our Lord, were, amongst

others, to relate this—that the Divine Spouse, in order that He might never be separated from her, but be more intimately united to her soul, were in the habit of manifesting Himself under the appearance of a bit of bread, and, in order to place Himself at her disposition, and be ever near her, nourished her every day with His own Flesh—what should we feel at such a recital? And what would they think whom we now address? Could any imagination or dream appear to them more absurd? Yet, nevertheless, this which appears absurd and impious to a mind which has not fathomed the excesses of the love of God, and which tries to measure by its own feeble notions, the power of this infinite love; this, I say, is what Jesus has done—not for a Teresa or a Gertrude alone, but for all the faithful, so that the most imperfect and the least fervent may often enjoy this benefit. I have said, and I again repeat, whoever will meditate on this prodigy of love, will not bring forward as a reason for disbelieving certain extraordinary graces the difficulty he feels in subjecting his mind to faith; since this excess of Divine love which our faith teaches us surpasses the graces, and, so to speak, even the special excesses of love which the saints relate, and consequently renders them very easy of belief.

But if we once succeed in persuading people that they may safely believe the graces and extraordinary revelations which the saints assert they received from God, it would be a great step gained; for what remains

to be proved in the accomplishment of our designs before closing this chapter would present no further difficulty, it being evident that the same reasoning which draws us to believe that in past ages these revelations and other extraordinary graces occurred, proves with equal force that they may take place in our own age. For, after all, there are holy souls in these days as formerly; Jesus Christ has yet in His Church spouses whom He cherishes; there are yet some amongst them who receive graces similar to those which the saints in ancient times received; there are still some, who under obedience, are obliged to reveal the graces they receive. Their writings, in their own hand, are in existence, and are read with admiration and public edification.

Now, with respect to these saintly souls, we may hold the same argument as with the Teresas and the Catherines, viz., no one can without rashness assert that they have given to the world, as Divine favours, lies, dreams, or delusions of the devil. Such a suspicion is quite inconsistent with the wisdom and the piety which we recognize in them; we may then prudently believe all that they have left us in writing. This argument will always have great force whenever it verifies these two points: first, that the persons of whom we speak, were really saints; secondly, that they were really the authors of the documents produced; above all, when to these premisses are added certain circumstances whose concurrence confirms the truth. And now to return to our subject.

Amongst the saintly souls of these latter times, to whom all these qualities and circumstances apply, we may fearlessly assert that not one was more remarkable than Mother Margaret Alacoque. For first, it appears certain that she wrote with her own hands, under obedience, a memoir of the graces which she received. This document has been formally recognized with all judicial formalities by a commissioner sent by the Bishop of Autun, and it is preserved, signed with the initials of this commissioner in the monastery of Paray.* In this document we find the revelation concerning the devotion to the Sacred Heart, with other clear and evident proofs that this virgin was chosen by God for this object, and that she was endowed with all necessary gifts and extraordinary favours for its accomplishment. Here, then, is the first point, respecting the writings of this venerable Mother, actually proved.

For the second, regarding her sanctity, we have the testimony of those who lived with her, her companions, her superiors, both male and female, her confessors, her directors. We have seen what Father de la Colombière thought of her; and the testimony of this holy man will always make a great impression on those who recognize his virtue, his talents, and his wisdom. But nothing will give us a better idea of the great virtue of this servant of God

* This memoir may be found in the beginning of the second volume of the Life and the Collection of the Blessed Mother Margaret Mary Alacoque's writings.

than reading the memoir written by herself, of which we have already spoken. Lastly, we have the entire history of her life written by one of the most prudent, the most learned, and the most pious prelates of the Church of France,* in which we shall find collected everything which can give one an idea of eminent virtue. To this we must add, the reputation of sanctity which survived the death of this venerable Mother; a reputation which gains ground every day, not only within her own order, but without—in every place to which the devotion to the Sacred Heart has penetrated. Now, God has never yet permitted a hypocrite or a visionary to enjoy, for any length of time after death, a great reputation. Delusions, when they exist, manifest themselves sooner or later, and never has it been known that women, seduced by the spirit of evil, have long passed as saints. More especially after death, which usually annihilates the memory of all men, except that of the servants of God.

We may also relate in confirmation of the holiness of this religious, a miracle, granted at her intercession, and authenticated on the spot, with the usual formalities, by the Vicar-General of the diocese of Autun, since Bishop of Soissons, and afterwards Archbishop of Sens. He was the author of the book of which we have spoken. The testimony which this illustrious prelate renders to the holiness of Mother Margaret, in a letter which we shall give later on,

* The work alluded to above.

after having witnessed for himself at Paray the general feeling on the subject, will furnish another incontestable proof of the truth.

Finally, in all which concerns more closely the revelation made to this holy woman in regard of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ, no greater proof can be afforded of its reality than the establishment and the progress of that devotion, which can only be the work of the power of God. We can apply to it the words of Gamaliel in the Acts of the Apostles: "If this work had been of men, it would have come to nought, but as it is of God, nothing could, or ever will destroy it."*

In concluding this chapter, we shall make one observation respecting those, who being more or less ignorant about things that have taken place, or who, leaning too much on their own lights, have been hitherto prejudiced against the devotion to the Sacred Heart. It is time that they should imitate the wisdom and the piety of others who, perceiving nothing contrary to piety on the one hand, and on the other, powerful reasons in favour of its Divine origin, feared, and not without cause, lest in following their own opinions they might be in reality opposing the designs of God—a fear suggested by Gamaliel to the Jews.† For this reason, laying aside all dispute, they took the part of declaring themselves in favour of this holy exercise and of leading others to embrace it, to the greater glory of Jesus Christ.

* Acts v. 38, 39. † Acts v. 39.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE NATURE OF THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART.

In order thoroughly to satisfy an enlightened reader on this capital point of our work, we must begin by making two important observations.

First Observation.—An object which, considered by itself alone, would not be entitled to certain honours, becomes entitled to them from the moment that it is intimately united with another object to which these honours are due. For example: The Sacred Humanity of Jesus Christ, which is a created object, and consequently not worthy in itself of the adoration of *latria*, becomes worthy of it by its union with the Divinity; so that we worship with one sole and undivided adoration of *latria*, the Humanity and the Divinity united in Jesus Christ, as all theologians teach with St. Thomas. The same thing is found with regard to purely natural objects. The body of man, for instance, united to the soul, becomes in virtue of this union worthy of the same honour as the soul itself. In man we honour these two things together, with one and the same honour, which is directed equally and indivisibly to the body and the soul. It is a general law that the spiritual object communicates its dignity and

its excellence to the corporal object to which it is united, and constitutes it worthy, in this state of union, of the same honour to which it is itself entitled.

Second Observation.—In all the devotions and festivals which are connected with the Sacred Humanity of Jesus Christ there is always a double object, one sensible and corporal, the other spiritual and invisible, which are united, and which we honour because they are so united, the spiritual communicating its dignity to the corporal, as we have already remarked. But the sensible and corporal object has this peculiar to itself, that it always gives its name to the devotion and the festival.

A few examples will make this clear. Let us take the devotion to the Cross of Christ, to His Wounds, to His Name, all of which have special festivals assigned them by the Church. What is the object of the feast of the Cross? There are two united; one sensible, the Cross itself; the other spiritual, Jesus crucified, working through the Cross the mystery of Redemption. The spiritual object communicates to the Cross its own dignity, and renders it, through this union, worthy of that special veneration which the entire Church offers with so much solemnity. But the festival does not take its name from the spiritual, but from the sensible and corporal object, which is the Cross itself, and hence the title, "feast of the Holy Cross."

In like manner, the devotion to the Wounds of

Jesus Christ has two objects indissolubly united, the one sensible: viz., the Wounds themselves; the other spiritual, and that is the suffering which these Wounds occasioned to Jesus Christ, and the mystery of love therein contained. The devotion takes its name from the Wounds, which are the sensible object; but that which renders these Wounds so adorable and so sweet is the spiritual object, the mystery of the suffering and the love of Jesus Christ which they contain.

We may say the same of the devotion and the feast of the "Name of Jesus." The sensible object is the Name itself, which is presented to the faithful. The spiritual object are the mysteries comprehended in that Name which signifies all that is most sublime in the Man-God. The remarks we have made regarding these three devotions will apply equally to all the others, and, this point conceded, we will return to our subject, and endeavour to give a just and clear idea of the devotion we are discussing.

If we desire to enter into the designs of Jesus Christ, we must not seek this idea of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, outside the revelation itself from which it derived its origin; and since it has pleased this amiable Saviour to give an explanation Himself on this subject, it is from His own words that we must gather the real idea which we seek. It will not be difficult, since Jesus Christ has spoken very clearly. With this object in view, we will submit to our readers this portion of the revelation;

but, as the Church has not yet pronounced in favour either of the revelation itself, or on the sanctity of the individual who received it, I must, in conformity with the rule prudently laid down by the Holy See on these matters, declare that I only give this revelation as a simple historical fact, yet one sufficiently credible and authenticated to merit belief on the part of prudent persons. I speak of it, as the revelation of St. Juliana was spoken of, which originated the feast of Corpus Christi; and the revelations of St. Catherine of Siena, and St. Magdalen of Pazzi were spoken of in their own time, and previous to the canonization of these Saints. With this proviso, I proceed to give the revelation as follows: "Thou canst not give Me a greater proof of love than by doing what I have so often asked of thee." And then exposing to me His Divine Heart: "Behold this Heart, which has so loved men that it has spared nothing, it has emptied itself and consumed itself in order to manifest its love for them; and, in return, I receive from the greater number only ingratitude, in the contempt, irreverence, sacrileges, the indifference manifested for Me in this Sacrament of love. But what wounds Me still more, hearts consecrated to Me treat Me thus. It is for this reason that I ask of thee that the first Friday after the octave of the Blessed Sacrament should be dedicated as a special festival to do honour to My Heart by devout acts of reparation and satisfaction, by communicating on that day to expiate the indignities received whilst exposed on the

altar; and I promise thee that My Heart shall expand to shed abundantly the influence of its Divine love on all those who shall thus honour it. Address thyself to My servant N., and tell Him from Me to do his utmost to establish this devotion."

It is evident from the whole context of this revelation, first, that the design of Jesus Christ is to establish a special devotion to His Sacred Heart; His words are positive; it is what He demands from this holy soul.

First, He assures her "that she can do nothing more pleasing in His sight." It is for this end He enjoins upon her "to address herself to His servant, and tell him on His behalf to do his best to establish this devotion." He desires that a special festival should be instituted for it, and He fixes the day.

Secondly, it is not less evident that we have to do here with the Heart itself of Jesus Christ in its simple and natural sense, and not metaphorically. Jesus Christ speaks of His Heart actually; this is clear by the action of uncovering His Heart, and of showing it; "exposing to me His Divine Heart," "behold this Heart," &c. He speaks of the Heart which He uncovers and exposes; it is this Heart which He wills should be honoured by a festival. We cannot take this word "Heart" in any other sense, as it is repeated several times in this revelation, without doing manifest violence to the wishes and the actions of Jesus Christ. Besides, it is clear in the life of the venerable Mother Margaret

that, wherever she mentions this devotion, she always speaks of the Heart of Jesus in its natural sense, as we have observed.

This then is the sensible object of the devotion which Jesus Christ wishes to establish—viz., His adorable Heart. I say sensible object, conformably with the preceding observations, for it is necessary to remark that this devotion, like the others, has two objects united, which are honoured with an undivided honour, the one sensible and corporal, the other invisible and spiritual. The sensible object we have sufficiently pointed out by our Lord, His Divine Heart. From it the devotion takes its title, and is called the devotion to the Heart of Jesus. As to the spiritual and principal object, it is pointed out very clearly in the following words of Jesus Christ: "Behold this Heart, which has so loved man that it has withheld nothing, even exhausting and consuming itself, to prove to them its love." Jesus Christ, in the ordinary language of men, and even of the Holy Spirit, attributes to His Heart the love which He bears us. It is this immense love with which the Sacred Heart is inflamed which is the spiritual object of the devotion. This love, by its intimate union with the Heart, renders it worthy of receiving undividedly the same worship and the same affections which are due to love itself, as we have already remarked, without mentioning other mysteries which are comprehended in, and represented by, this adorable Heart, which infinitely exalt its excellence, and which we shall refer to further on.

But we must here also allude to a circumstance which is essential to the nature of our devotion, and that is, that the love with which the Divine Heart of Jesus is inflamed, must be considered as a love despised and wounded by the ingratitude of men. This circumstance is expressed in these other words which our Lord adds: "And in return I receive for the most part only ingratitude, contempt, irreverence, sacrileges, in the indifference which they manifest towards Me in this Sacrament of love." The Heart of Jesus must therefore here be considered under two aspects: on the one hand, as burning with love for men, and on the other, as cruelly wounded by the ingratitude of these same men. These two motives united must excite in us two feelings, both of which are equally essential to devotion to the Sacred Heart, viz., love, which corresponds to its love, and grief which would lead us to make reparation for the insults it endures through the hard-heartedness of men.

Finally, the practices prescribed by Jesus Christ in fulfilment of this double duty, are laid down in these last words: "I ask of thee that the first Friday after the octave of the Blessed Sacrament should be dedicated as a special festival to do honour to My Heart, by devout acts of reparation and satisfaction, by communicating on that day to expiate the indignities it received whilst exposed on the altar." Jesus Christ contents Himself with explaining here the principal exercise of the devotion which He desires to establish; but it is not the only practice which must be employed to do

honour to the Divine Heart. There are many others which will be mentioned further on.

Having made these observations, it will be easy to give a clear and precise idea of the nature of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ. We may define it in this manner. "It is an exercise of religion which has for its object the adorable Heart of our Lord, inflamed with love for men, and outraged by the ingratitude of these same men; and for its motive the honouring this Divine Heart by rendering it all the homage which love and gratitude can inspire; and more particularly to offer reparation for the insults it receives in the Sacrament of love." Let us explain this definition, and try to put it in the clearest light possible.

In the first place, "It is an exercise of religion, which has for its object the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ." We must here remark that there are in the Church many established devotions, which although differing from each other in their special object, yet have all of them reference to our Lord. One honours His Sacred Body; another His adorable Wounds; a third His Cross; a fourth His Name; a fifth His Blood; and so of the rest. The devotion of which we speak here concerns His Heart. Certainly this Divine Heart is not in itself an object less worthy of the devotion of the faithful than the others we have named; and no objection can be brought to bear against the devotion to the Heart, which would not apply equally and with even more force to the

devotion to the Wounds, the Cross, the Name of Jesus, as anybody will admit who is capable of judging in these matters.

But, that we may leave no occasion of error to simple, uninstructed persons, and that we may forestall any doubts that may arise, we will add another observation to those we have already made. The Sacred Heart of Jesus in this devotion must not be considered apart from those things both spiritual and Divine with which it is indissolubly connected. We must on the contrary consider it as intimately united to the Soul and to the Person of our Lord, full of life, of feeling, and of knowledge.

From this follows a consequence worthy of remark, which is that all the honours which are paid to this adorable Heart, do not terminate precisely and solely in the material Heart; they terminate equally and indivisibly in the Soul and the Person united to this Heart; as the honours rendered to a living man are not actually confined to the body or the soul, but comprise the two together, forming thus a whole, which is honoured without any division.

From this we deduce two other consequences: one is that we may reasonably and in a very accurate sense say of the Heart of our Lord, that it loves, suffers, is afflicted, outraged, &c. And the other is, that we may address to this Divine Heart, prayers, acts, affections, praises, in a word, all that can be addressed to the Person; since, in fact, it is the Person united to this Heart that really

receives them. This has been overlooked by those who have seemed to disapprove of this devotion towards the Heart of Jesus, and who thus appeared to have regarded this Divine Heart as only an inanimate and insensible portion of the Body of Jesus Christ, setting aside the intelligent and spiritual adjuncts which are united to it, as we have already observed. And now we will resume our definition.

The words which follow are: "Inflamed with love for men." They show that we must look upon the Heart of our Lord as consumed with that immense love which led Him to do and to suffer all that He did and suffered for us, but particularly to institute the Sacrament of the Altar, which was the crowning effort of His love. It is this consideration of the love with which this Divine Heart is inflamed, which ought to incite our tenderness towards Him; an essential feature in this devotion.

Some one will ask perhaps, whether one can say correctly, in speaking of the heart, that "it burns with love:" and whether it be not to the soul alone that love pertains, as to its true and sole cause; the more so, that love being a spiritual act, it would seem as though the material heart could take no part in it. Now, if it were the fact that the heart could have no part in the emotion of loving, the foundation of the proposed devotion having failed, the devotion would fall to the ground of itself. The objection is plausible and capable of misleading, but we shall judge of its worth by the following reflections.

There are in man two sorts of operations: those which are purely spiritual and independent of the senses, in which the soul alone takes part; the others sensible, in which the soul and the body have each their share. Love which is purely spiritual is independent of the material heart; but with regard to sensible love, which in man follows naturally the spiritual, it is certain that the heart takes part, that the heart cooperates with and receives from it very strong impressions. This is the doctrine of St. Thomas, who, when explaining the precept of loving God with all the heart, speaks thus: "As it is the nature of fire to burn, so it is the nature of the heart to love; the life of the heart is love; that is why it is impossible for a heart that desires to live to be without love. The heart then, which, as philosophers say, is the first source and the seat of the natural life, is incited by this commandment, to cooperate in its own way to produce the act of the life of grace." "The heart, again," according to Aristotle, "is the first organ of sensation; and by this means it is reasonable that the act insisted on by the first of all precepts, should be rendered sensible by the heart." Thus then, according to the doctrine of the holy Doctor, spiritual love becomes sensible love through the heart; and it may be truly said that the heart cooperates in its own fashion in the act of love.

St. Thomas imbibed this doctrine from the philosophers who wrote before him; it is in fact common to them all, and is founded on the nature

of the union of the soul with the body, which puts a necessary and mutual dependence between them both. The soul is in truth the principal seat of the affections; but while it is united to the body, these affections communicate themselves naturally to the sensitive appetite; and it is certain that in these movements of the sensitive appetite the body takes part. The soul depends on the organs of the body, which serve it as instruments of which each has its special functions for the production of the acts which are peculiar to it. The eyes are the organs of sight, the ears of hearing, and so of the other senses. Now the principal organ of the sensible affections, particularly of love, grief, &c., is the heart, as we shall prove further on in this work. Since, then, we may correctly say that the soul sees through the eyes, that it hears through the ears, we may equally say that it loves through the heart. And as we may say again in a true sense that the eyes see, and that they are in their own way the principle of sight; that the ears hear, and that they are the principle of hearing; we may also say in the same sense that the heart loves and is the principle of love. This truth is confirmed by the experience of men in general, whether saints or not. Whoever has a heart and has ardently loved anything, needs nothing more than his own experience to convince him of the reality of the impressions which love makes on the heart.

The saints in the extraordinary paths of grace frequently experience with what force and sweetness Divine

love communicates itself to the heart. We know all that this love has produced in the heart of a St. Philip Neri, a St. Peter of Alcantara, a St. Francis Xavier, a St. Stanislas Kostka, a St. Gertrude, a St. Teresa, a St. Magdalen of Pazzi, a St. Catherine of Siena, and in those of so many other saints whose positive testimony we shall give later on. These souls, so singularly favoured by God, testify to us in their writings, how, in the enjoyment which God gives them of Himself, when the soul is inundated with those torrents of joy and delight which the possession of the Infinite bestows, the heart, participating in these delights, experiences agitation and impressions equally ravishing and ineffable; how it dilates, kindles, feels itself as on fire with a flame which is Divine, melts with sweetness in the midst of the ardours which consume it. On the other hand, how, in the absence of this Divine object, or at the remembrance of offences committed against it, the affliction to which the soul is reduced, communicating itself to the heart, it is oppressed with sorrow, plunged into unspeakable bitterness, and is pierced as it were with darts of mortal anguish!

That which the saints experienced of the force and the sweetness of Divine love has been in some proportion felt by the rest of mankind with respect to natural love; and it is not less evident from experience, that natural and profane love produce very strong impressions on the heart. It is not for us to describe these impressions; but according to the testimony given by those who have experienced them,

we do not fear to be contradicted when we assert, as a truth which is incontestable, that the heart takes a prominent part in the emotion of love. It is this constant and universal experience which gave rise to those expressions which are common in the language of men and even of God Himself: "A heart burning with love;" "a heart pierced with sorrow;" "a heart overwhelmed with sadness;" "a contrite heart;" "a broken heart."

From this again comes the feeling so universal among the nations of the world, which leads them to regard the heart as the seat and the principle of love, as the natural symbol of love, as the tenderest pledge which can be given of our love. The union between the heart and love appeared to them so intimate, that out of these two objects they formed, so to speak, but one in ordinary language, joining together under one and the same name the heart and love; nothing being more usual in the language of men than the use of the word heart to express love. Thus we say: "To love God with all the heart;" to give one's heart to God; to detach one's heart from creatures; and this language is not only that of men, it is also the language made use of by God Himself in the Scriptures: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;"* "The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts,"† &c. It is also the language usually employed by the Church: "Come, Holy Spirit, kindle in our hearts the fire of Thy love;"

* St. Matt. xxii. 37. † Rom. v. 5.

"inflame our hearts with the fire of the Holy Spirit;" "transfix our hearts with Thy love," &c. It follows from all these remarks that we may say correctly—the heart loves, that it is the principle of love, that it burns with love. And here is the answer to the proposed objection.

After all these observations it is time to return to our subject, and to apply to the Sacred Heart of Jesus that which we have said generally of the human heart. It is of faith that Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, was like unto all other men as to His Humanity, except in sin and imperfection. "Tempted in all things like as we are, without sin."* He loved then after the manner of other men, and conformably to the nature of man. His Heart then took part in His love, cooperated in His love, was the principle and the seat of it. He experienced through it impressions like other hearts, with this difference—that Jesus having loved with an immense love, to which the love of all other hearts has nothing comparable, the impressions made on this Divine Heart must infinitely surpass those which love made on the hearts of the saints. We may form an idea of the ardour of these impressions of love on the Heart of Jesus, by that which faith teaches us of the impressions made on this Sacred Heart by other affections much less capable of moving it, such as His sadness in the Garden of Olives, which amounted to agony, even to the sweat of blood. For this adorable Heart,

* Heb. iv. 15.

which was principally formed for love, must have been by its nature more susceptible of love than of the other affections of the soul, and, consequently, the effects of love upon Him must have been far more intense than those of sadness. We can say therefore of the Heart of Jesus, with more truth than of any other heart, "that it burned with love;" and it is this consideration which must render this Sacred Heart infinitely sweet to those souls who contemplate it in this condition.

We must add to this first consideration those of the sufferings endured by this Divine Heart for our salvation; of its grief at the sight of our sins, of its sorrows, its anguish, its abandonment, its desolation, in a word, all the dolours of Christ's interior Passion, which weighed with all its intensity on this Sacred Heart, which was, we may say, the centre of the affections of His soul, as we shall discuss more at length in the second part of this work.

We must also add the Sacred Wound which this Divine Heart willed to receive on the Cross from the blow of the lance (according to the common belief of the Faithful)—a wound so calculated to touch our hearts, and to excite the tenderness of those faithful souls in their contemplation of this beloved Object.

It is in considering the Heart of our Lord in these various phases of love and of suffering; now in the sweet ardour of His love; now agitated

by the violence of the desires He unceasingly formed for the glory of His Father and for our salvation; now, again, in the effects of the same love, overwhelmed with sadness at the sight of our sins; agonizing, pierced with a thousand deadly shafts; contrite, humiliated, abandoned by His Father; finally, cruelly wounded on the Cross, shedding His Blood, even to the last drop; it is, I say, in contemplating Him in this condition, that we find ourselves roused to the most tender devotion to this adorable Heart. The saints, enlightened by God, and penetrated with the unction of grace, were unable to find terms tender and sublime enough to express what they felt in speaking of this Divine Heart. In their writings, their colloquies, and their transports, they call it the "Treasure of the Divinity," "Ark of the Testament," "Source of all Graces," "Throne of Love," "Fountain of Life," "Treasure of Eternal Wisdom and Charity," "Ark of Divine Fidelity," "Ocean of Divine Mercy," "Gate of Paradise," "Secret dwelling-place of the Spouse," "her refuge," "her solace," "the place of her pure delight, from whence flows the sweetest honey," "the precious treasure of her beatitude," "the door through which God comes to us and we go to Him," &c. These expressions are taken from St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, St. Gertrude, Blosius, Lanspergius, and other highly contemplative souls, whose words we shall quote at length further on in this book.

Finally, in order to give a just idea of the nature of

the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ, we must use a last characteristic included in the following words of the definition which we are explaining: "Outraged by the ingratitude of these same men, and especially in the Eucharist."

It is not sufficient to have considered the infinite dignity and the immense love of the Heart of Jesus, which render this Sacred Heart worthy of our most profound adoration and of our most tender love; we must consider it yet again as cruelly outraged by the ingratitude of men, and meriting on this account another species of worship, which consists in the reparation we owe it for the contempt and the insults it suffers. The Heart of Jesus loves, as we have said, with an immense love; this love has shown itself by the most marvellous excesses, and especially by the admirable institution of the Mystery of our altars. But alas! this love of a God, excessive and ineffable as it is; this love, which ought to have won all hearts to Jesus Christ, is nevertheless forgotten by men. It is repaid, for the most part, only by contempt, and by outrages even in the Sacrament of His love. For to what is it not exposed, on the one hand from heretics, who have renewed against it all the outrages of His Passion, on the other from Catholics themselves, through their irreverence, their coldness, and by the sacrileges of which they are so often guilty? And hence the consideration which Jesus Christ Himself proposes to us, which should incite us to make this atonement, this worthy repara-

tion to the Heart of our Lord, which is the principal end of this devotion. We have expressed it in the concluding words of the definition : "An exercise, the aim of which is to love and honour this Sacred Heart, and particularly to atone to it for the insults it receives in the Sacrament of His love."

In concluding this chapter, let us try to draw from it a very important point, viz., a clear and perfect idea of the object of the devotion to the Heart of our Lord. Many persons make this mistake; on hearing the mention of this sacred name, "the Heart of Jesus"—they limit their thoughts to the material Heart of our Lord; they only look upon this Divine Heart as mere flesh, devoid of life and feeling, pretty nearly as they would look upon some holy yet material relic. Ah! how widely different, and how infinitely superior is the idea which should be entertained of it.

We must first, as we have already observed, consider this Heart as intimately and indissolubly united to the soul and the adorable Person of Jesus Christ, elevated by this union to a condition absolutely Divine, full of life, of feeling, and of intelligence.

We must consider it in the second place as the principal and most noble organ of the sensible affections of our Lord, of His love, His zeal, His obedience, His wishes, His griefs, His joy, His sadness, as the principle and the seat of these same affections, and of all the virtues of the Man-God.

In the third place, we must consider it as the centre of all the interior sufferings which our salva-

tion cost Him, and, besides, as cruelly wounded by the blow from the lance which He received when on the Cross.

Finally, we must consider it as sanctified by the most precious gifts of the Holy Spirit, and by the infusion of all the treasures of grace of which it is capable.

All these belong, in truth, to this Divine Heart; all are its characteristics, from them it derives its dignity, its price, its excellence, and consequently all enter into the aim of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus. It is this Heart, thus affected, thus on fire, thus afflicted, thus wounded, which is the real object of the devotion of which we treat.

Let us contemplate this admirable result, which follows from the union of the Heart of Jesus with the Soul and the Divinity, with the gifts and graces which it contains, with the virtues and affections of which it is the principle and the seat, the interior sufferings of which it is the centre, with the wound which it received upon the Cross. This is the perfect whole, if I may so express myself, which is proposed to the adoration and love of the faithful; an object clearly the most holy, the most noble, the most grand, the most sublime, the most Divine, and at the same time the most sweet, the most lovable, and the most tender that it is possible to conceive.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART AND DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

THIS chapter is intended for those who have confounded these two devotions, and it will serve to make still better known the nature of the devotion of which we treat.

There have been from the very beginning people who asserted that there was no essential difference between devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and that to the Sacred Heart, and who consequently rejected the latter as only adding a new name to a very old devotion. But whoever has read what we have said in the preceding chapters will readily perceive how far this opinion is removed from the truth, it being evident that these two devotions differ from each other: first, in their objects; secondly, in the motives for honouring these objects; thirdly, in the essential end of their institution. That is to say, they differ in the three most important points which can distinguish devotions one from the other.

They differ in the first place in their object; for, in the one is proposed alone the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ, without any reference to the rest of His

Body. In the other the entire Body of Jesus Christ is proposed under the Sacramental Species, without any special reference to His Heart.

They differ, in the second place, in the motives for honouring the object, for in the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament the motive for honouring the Body of Jesus Christ is the infinite dignity of this adorable Flesh, which, through its union with the Word, is worthy of the adoration of angels and men. In the devotion to the Sacred Heart the essential motive for honouring it is the love with which it is inflamed and the sufferings it endured through the ingratitude of men, which has relation to the Divine Heart, and to no other part of the Body.

In short, in instituting the feast of the Blessed Sacrament the object was to render to Jesus Christ, abiding amongst us, the adoration, the gratitude, and the love which are so justly due to Him in this ineffable mystery. It is in order to satisfy these obligations that the Church has instituted the festival of the Blessed Sacrament with its solemn octave, with processions, decorations, and all the pomp and magnificence with which this feast is celebrated. But in that of the Sacred Heart the principal object of its institution is to make reparation to our Lord for the insults His love has received in the Holy Sacrament through the ingratitude of men—a reparation which Jesus Christ desires should be directed to His Heart, which is, as it were, the source and the seat of this love. Now it is clear that this object is not attained by devotion to the

Blessed Sacrament, for this devotion would still remain intact, even if our Lord had never been outraged in this mystery. All that is now done in honour of this adorable Sacrament would still be justly given without any other aim than to render to our Lord the outward marks of respect and gratitude due to His Divine presence among us.

Part the Second.

On the Excellence of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

We should form our estimate of the excellence of a devotion by considering these four points—its object, its end, the acts and practices of virtue which it embraces, and the fruit it produces. The greater and more perfect it is in these four points the more excellent is the devotion. Now with regard to the devotion to the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ, whether we consider its object, its end, the acts and practices of virtue it embraces, or the fruit it produces, we shall find nothing of the kind in the Church that is greater or more perfect. This will be the subject of our Second Part.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE EXCELLENCE OF THE OBJECT SET BEFORE US IN THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART.

It is chiefly from its object that a devotion derives its excellence, as it is this that stamps it with its true character. The object of this devotion is the Heart of Jesus, an object which clearly is the noblest, the holiest, the greatest, the most Divine and at the same time the sweetest and the most worthy of our love that could possibly be proposed to us. Let us look with the eyes of faith upon this adorable Heart, and that look will alone be sufficient to make us feel the truth of this, and at the same time to convince us that the devotion directed to it possesses a character of holiness, nobility, and grandeur, of sweetness and amiability, that no other can surpass. Before going any further into what relates to the excellence of this incomparable object of devotion, it is well to make a general remark as to the excellence of the adorable Flesh of Jesus Christ, a remark well calculated to prepare the mind for what we have to say of His Heart.

No one can doubt that the Flesh of Jesus Christ is an object infinitely worthy of the devotion of the faithful on account of its union with the Eternal

Word, on account of the heavenly gifts so freely bestowed and heaped upon it, on account of all it suffered for the glory of God and the salvation of man, and finally on account of the wonderful privilege, to which God has raised it, of being in the Eucharist the food of our souls and the source of sanctifying grace, according to the express words of Jesus Christ so often repeated in the Gospels: "The bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world. If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever. . . . Except you eat of the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood you shall not have life in you. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath everlasting life. . . . For My Flesh is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me and I in him. He that eateth this bread shall live for ever."* All these prerogatives make this deified Flesh infinitely worthy of the deepest adoration and the most tender love of angels and men. It is to give public testimony to this truth, and to fulfil so imperative a duty, that the Church has established a solemn feast specially consecrated to the honour of this Divine Body. And that the faithful may not be misled as to the real object of this solemnity, she has decreed that it shall bear a name which marks its true character, and therefore calls it the feast of Corpus Christi—the Body of Jesus Christ. It is thus clear, though

* St. John vi. 52, 54—57, 59.

perhaps sufficient attention is not paid to the fact, that the special and particular object of this feast is the very Flesh of Jesus Christ. The Church openly declares it, by the name which she has given to the feast, as we have just remarked; by the profession which she makes of celebrating on that day *Mysteria Corporis et Sanguinis Christi*—the Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ; and finally, in the Office appointed for the day in which the same intention is expressed throughout. We must conclude from this that it is not precisely in honour of the Person of Jesus Christ that the festival is instituted, but in honour of His Flesh, His Body and His Blood. It is not to His Soul, or His Divinity, or His Person, that the feast is formally directed, all these are only involved in it indirectly, and as we say by *concomitance*. Its direct and immediate object is the Flesh of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament: and truly it is most just that God, the sovereign rewarder of all, should assign in His Church to this Divine Flesh honours proportioned to the sufferings and indignities it once suffered for love of Him.

The remark we have just made has been put in the clearest light by the most famous preacher of the last century* in his sermon on the feast of the Blessed Sacrament. In this discourse he addresses himself of set purpose to a panegyric on the adorable Flesh of Jesus Christ, and shows, with his accustomed

* Written in 1732.

solidity and eloquence the dignity and excellence of that deified Flesh. He talks of the worship due to it, of the end the Church proposes to herself in this great solemnity, and of the manner in which the faithful should honour this adorable Flesh. After this remark with regard to the Flesh of Jesus Christ we now turn to His Sacred Heart. I have no hesitation in saying that all that makes the Flesh of the Man-God so worthy an object of devotion for the whole Church is united in His Divine Heart, and this in such an excellent manner that we have good reason to wonder that there was ever a moment's doubt as to whether the honours that we see the whole Church giving to His Flesh could be paid to His Sacred Heart.

We may consider the Heart of Jesus under two aspects, (1) as regards its own excellence, (2) in relation to men, to whom it is proposed as an object of devotion. This twofold consideration will fully bring out the truth which we desire to establish in this chapter.

Article I.

On the excellence of the Heart of Jesus considered in itself.

We are about to touch upon the chief points from which this excellence is derived. If the reader will be so good as to follow us with a little docility and attention he will acknowledge the truth of our proposition, especially if the Spirit of God, Who alone can

give him to understand and delight in such matters, deigns to grant him light, for which he should humbly pray to Him.

§ 1.

The first reflection on the excellence of the Heart of Jesus is based upon the natural properties of the heart. We shall briefly indicate them according to the common opinion of men, which is in accord with that of the most eminent philosophers whom St. Thomas has followed.

1. The heart is the noblest part of the body, and as there is nothing in the material creation more excellent than the Body of Jesus Christ, it is easy to judge what should be thought of His Heart.

2. The heart is the principle of the natural life. That of Jesus was therefore the principle of the life of a Man-God. His life is of infinite excellence; His Heart then must participate in a very special way in this infinite excellence.

3. The heart is the source of the blood; it is in the heart that the blood is purified; it is from the heart that it is distributed throughout the members. We may judge then of the value and excellence of the Heart of Jesus by the value and excellence of His Blood, an infinite value since it is the price of the redemption of the world. St. Thomas in his work on the Sacrament of the Altar devotes six chapters to treating of the dignity, the excellence, and the value of the Blood of Jesus Christ and of the honour due

to it; now it is evident that the Heart of Jesus is not of less value, or less worthy of honour, than His Precious Blood.

4. It is the office of the heart to impart to the whole body a gentle life-giving influence, which together with the vital heat conveys life and movement to all the members. Put a stop to the influence of the heart, and all is still throughout the whole man; the heart grows weak, and everything else is weakened with it; let this one part of the body suffer any injury, and the whole machine is put out of order. The office of the Heart of Jesus was, therefore, to sustain throughout this mortal life the Body of the Man-God; to impart to all its organs and senses heat, life, movement, and the vigour needed for their functions. The life of Jesus necessarily depended upon the unceasing influence of His Heart, and consequently all the actions of our Divine Saviour, all His movements, words, actions, steps, feelings, operations, in a word, all that His Sacred Body did and suffered, had for its natural principle His Divine Heart. Hence it follows that there is in this Sacred Heart an infinite excellence, which those who know the excellence of the Sacred Humanity of Jesus should never be tired of contemplating, and which should make this Divine Heart the sweetest object of their devotion—especially if we add to this first consideration those which follow.

§ 2.

The excellence of the Heart of Jesus springs in the second place from its union with the most excellent and most perfect Soul that has ever existed. Of this Soul this Divine Heart was the noblest organ employed in the production of its sensible affections. Now this union of heart and soul has this special result, that it imparts to the heart an excellence proportioned to that of the soul itself. Hence has arisen that universal feeling among civilized peoples which leads them to pay to the hearts of great men after their death, honours proportioned to the excellence of the souls to which they were united, doubtless on the ground that the heart having been, with the soul, the principle of the affections, it deserves to share in the same honours. If, then, we are to judge of the excellence of the Heart of Jesus by the excellence of His Soul, how great must be the excellence of that Divine Heart.

§ 3.

A third claim to greatness and excellence for the Heart of Jesus is derived in a very special manner, from its union with the Eternal Word—a union which by making the Sacred Heart really the Heart of God raises it infinitely above every other created being, and confers upon all its movements an infinite merit. All that belongs to the adorable Person of Jesus Christ is infinitely worthy of our veneration. The

smallest portion of His Body, a drop of His Blood, a hair of His Head, deserves our adoration. Even things in themselves the most worthless, become worthy of honour by merely touching His Body, as we see in the case of the Cross, the nails, the lance, the thorns. What, then, is the worth of His Divine Heart, and what honours can ever be adequate to its infinite excellence? If the lance that pierced this adorable Heart on the Cross became by mere contact with it an object of veneration to all the Church, what are we to think of the Heart that could confer such dignity on a piece of iron in itself so worthless?

§ 4.

A fourth source of the excellence of the Heart of Jesus is in the Godlike function for which it was created, and which is no other than to burn unceasingly with the purest and most ardent flames of Divine love. It was inflamed with this Divine fire from the first instant of its existence until its death, without one moment of interruption, and it will burn with that same fire through all eternity. We should have to understand the excellence of Divine love in order to understand at the same time what must be the excellence of a Heart Whose everlasting employment it is to receive the impressions of that love and to produce its acts, a single one of which gives more honour to God than the love even of all possible creatures could give Him throughout an eternity. It is chiefly from this that we may judge

what must be the infinite pleasure which the Eternal Father takes in this Sacred Heart, for nothing can be sweeter to His eyes than the love of His only-begotten Son. Moreover, this delight of the Eternal Father in the Heart of Jesus is such a constant feature in revelations that are above suspicion, and of which we shall make mention in the sequel, that it seems there can be no reasonable doubt of it. It is therefore most fitting that spiritual and interior souls should carefully investigate the causes of this predilection of the Eternal Father for the Heart of His Son, in order to manifest them to the faithful, according to His good pleasure which He has deigned to reveal in our days. On our part we shall endeavour in this work to throw some light upon this truth which is still involved in obscurity, ardently desiring and beseeching of God that He would deign to raise up souls more worthy to receive His Heaven-sent light, and make known the greatness of this Divine Heart. For from what God has already revealed, we cannot doubt that it contains ineffable riches, the knowledge of which would procure great glory for Jesus Christ and be a source of blessing to the Church.

§ 5.

We may also form an estimate of the excellence of the Heart of Jesus by the holiness that belongs to it. It is of faith that the Heart of Jesus is holy with the holiness of the Eternal Word, Who is united

to it, and therefore it is holy with an infinite holiness. But as this holiness is common to all the component parts of the Body of Jesus, it is not this that we have in this instance specially in view. There is a holiness which belongs peculiarly to His Heart. In order to understand this we must remark:

1. That the human body participates in the holiness of the soul that gives it life—hence the veneration of the relics of the saints. And it follows from the same principle that the holier the soul, the holier too must the body be. In fact the relics of the greatest saints are more precious than those of others. For example, a relic of the Blessed Virgin would be worthy of veneration far beyond that which is due to the relics of the other saints. The reverence paid to anything must be proportioned to its holiness.

2. Of all the parts of the body that which participates most intimately in the holiness of the soul is the heart. Thus it is generally regarded as the most precious relic of a saint. The reason for this difference arises from the properties of the heart, of which we have spoken above, for since the heart is the seat of the holy affections which sanctify the soul itself, it must necessarily participate in a special manner in that same holiness.

But with regard to the heart we have to make another remark, which deserves particular attention. It is this: it is certain that the most wonderful gifts with which God favours the saints in this life are

in a very special manner received by the heart. Souls thus favoured give in their writings unanimous testimony to this fact. They testify that in the extraordinary ways of grace the infusion of these heavenly gifts takes place in the heart in a very real and sensible manner. For instance, it is the heart that has to bear desolation, sadness, pain, and other interior sufferings that are so common in the spiritual life. From the heart come sobs and sighs. Contrition, if it is lively, pierces and rends the heart and often reduces it to extremities. The heart in the visitations of Divine love burns, languishes, and receives impressions that no human speech can express. In a word, whether the soul is enjoying heavenly sweetness in its holy intercourse with its Divine Spouse, or under supernatural trials is being purified by a thousand interior sufferings, the heart feels all these effects one after another in so real, so sensible, so vivid and extraordinary a way, that according to the testimony of holy souls who have experienced it, it is impossible to doubt that all this takes place physically in the heart. The imagination has no part in this: and in order to convince every reasonable man who reads this, we shall in a special chapter* bring forward on this point evidence so clear, precise, and trustworthy that no one can resist it.

Moreover, it continually appears by the testimony

* See at the end of this Second Part the additional chapter, Appendix, Art. I.

and experience of the saints* that the heart is the place where the Holy Spirit dwells in a sensible manner, and in which Jesus Christ especially makes His presence felt by His spouses. It is there He dwells *as upon His throne* or as in *His garden of delights;* these are their own expressions. All this is so certain from the experience of pure souls raised to union with God, that no one who knows anything of these matters can cast a doubt upon it.

This being presupposed, it is easy to understand in what a wonderful way the heart must be sanctified by the infusion of all these heavenly gifts, by all these God-sent feelings of joy and sadness, of delight and suffering, and of so many other holy affections which belong so specially to the heart that they have nothing to do with the other organs of the body. Now it is clear that the more excellent are these supernatural graces, the more fully will they communicate to the heart that holiness of which it is capable. From this follows what we desire to establish by these reflections, namely, the ineffable holiness of the Heart of Jesus Christ, since all the graces of this kind which have been communicated to the hearts of the saints, even if they were all united together, would be as nothing compared to the riches of this Divine Heart.

We shall add to this a concluding remark which

* See the *Life of St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi*, chap. xciii.; the *Insinuationes* of St. Gertrude, Abbess of the Order of St. Benedict, containing her life and revelations, bk. ii. chap. xxiii.

we gather from the expressions to be found in the lives of many of the saints—namely, that Jesus often makes use of His Heart to enrich their souls with His most precious favours. St. Gertrude has left it on record that the graces she received from the Heart of Jesus were ineffable;* St. Mechtildis says that if if she were to write down the favours she had received from the Heart of Jesus, a large book would not hold them,† and it is remarked in her life that seldom was there any intimate communication between Jesus and this Saint without her receiving some special favour immediately from His adorable Heart. Later on we shall relate other examples in confirmation of this truth.

Those who feel a difficulty in believing in such favours, ought to reflect that Jesus Christ actually makes use of His own Flesh in the Blessed Sacrament as a means of imparting grace to our souls, and that during His mortal life there came forth from that same Flesh a Divine virtue which healed all kinds of diseases.‡ What difficulty then can there be in the fact that He makes use of His Heart as a means of communicating His most excellent favours to pure souls? But these are mysteries hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed only to little ones.§ Ah! if the riches of the Heart of Jesus,

* *Insinuationes*, lib. ii. cap. xxiii. ; and lib. iii. cap. xxvi.

† *Revelations of St. Mechtildis*, bk. i. chap. xxviii.

‡ "Virtus de illo exibat, et sanabat omnes" (St. Luke vi. 19).

§ "Abscondisti hæc a sapientibus et prudentibus, et revelasti ea parvulis" (St. Matt. xi. 25).

the overflowing fountains of holiness which it contains, and the infinite worth of its wonderful prerogatives were known to all as they were known to a Gertrude, a Mechtildis, a Catherine of Siena, a Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, how little need there would be of arguments to convince them of the excellence of this Divine Heart.

§ 6.

The Heart of Jesus, moreover, derives its excellence from the virtues of which it is the fount. There is a universal opinion among men, dictated by their nature and confirmed by the words of the Holy Spirit, that the heart has an intimate and very real connection with the virtues of the soul, and that by these virtues it is in a special way ennobled and perfected. In fact we see how in the daily speech of men all the virtues belonging to the soul are equally attributed to the heart: for just as speaking of the soul we talk of a great, a generous, a magnanimous soul, in the same way speaking of the heart we say "a large heart, a liberal and generous heart, a magnanimous heart, a patient heart, a pure heart, a gentle and humble heart," and so on. Again, we see that as men measure the excellence of the soul by the excellence of its virtues, they deal in the same way with the excellence of the heart: its virtues give it its value and merit, and the more perfect these virtues in any one, the more precious does his heart become in the general esteem of men. Hence the

hearts of illustrious men, of great princes, of heroes, and above all of saints, are regarded with particular veneration after their death, and are honoured in proportion to the virtues that these great men have practised. If we wish to discover the reason of this natural and universal feeling, one more apt can hardly be suggested than that which we have already more than once indicated—namely, that as the affections of the soul impart themselves to the heart and the heart really shares in the sensible production of these affections, it is but fitting in the nature of things that the heart should in its degree participate in the honours which the soul has earned by the practice of these virtues.

But if this truth be once received—that more or less perfect virtues make the heart more or less worthy of honour—what are we to say of the Heart of Jesus, the fountain and centre of all the virtues of the Man-God, that is to say, of all the purest, the most perfect, the most heroic, admirable virtues—virtues the most deserving of our wonder and our love, and compared to which all other virtues that ever have been, great and admirable though they be, are as nothing? And what must have been the nobility of all the sentiments of a Heart in which there could be nothing unworthy of the greatness and majesty of God, and in which there necessarily must have been united all that is worthy of the Supreme Being! In the Heart of a God what must be the greatness, the loftiness, the perfection of every senti-

ment and of every affection! Who can ever measure the love of the Heart of Jesus for His Father, its zeal for His glory, its submission to His will, its sorrow and affliction at the sight of the offences committed against His Sovereign Majesty! And with regard to men, what must have been the divine dispositions of that Heart, its charity, its goodness, its gentleness, its compassion, its patience, its mercy! As for the virtues that men are wont to most admire, such as courage, fortitude, constancy, generosity, magnanimity, magnificence, who can ever express the degree of perfection in which the Heart of Jesus possesses them all! In this Divine Heart everything surpasses our understanding and our powers of speech. If, then, the hearts of great saints deserve such honours, and if the greater were the virtues they possessed, the more precious and worthy of veneration do their hearts become, what are we to think of the Heart of Jesus, compared to which all that is perfect, great, and holy in them is but weakness and imperfection.

§ 7.

Finally, it is evident that the more a created object contributes to the glory of the Creator, the more it becomes dear to God, and worthy of the veneration of men; for if we desire to take a sound view of things, this is the true rule for estimating the worth and dignity of the objects in question. Hence it clearly follows that of all created objects the Heart of Jesus is the most worthy of the favour of God and

the worship of angels and men, since it is certain that among created things there is nothing which has contributed more to the glory of God, and it will thus contribute to it for all eternity—a single affection of the Sacred Heart rendering more honour to God than all creatures together could procure for Him.

We must conclude from all these considerations that the Heart of Jesus, considered in itself and having regard only to its own excellence, is an object infinitely worthy of the worship of the faithful. It remains to consider it in relation to men to whose love and adoration it is proposed; and this consideration will make us realize still more strongly the truth we have set before us.

Article II.

On the Heart of Jesus considered in relation to Men.

In fact, what could be proposed to Christians more worthy of their devotion and better calculated to inspire it than the Heart of their Redeemer? What other sensible object is there in the whole universe as holy, or as loveable, and the mere sight of which recalls so sweetly and so forcibly the memory of the love of Jesus for us, of His goodness to us, His virtues, His sufferings? All this is contained in His Sacred Heart, all this is, as it were, stamped and graven upon it in ineffaceable characters, so that if even at the first glance we cast at His adorable Heart we do not feel ourselves struck by all these

marks of His tenderness for us, it must be because we are wanting either in our faith as to what He has done for us, or in our sense of what we owe Him. When I think of the feelings with which nature inspires men in regard to the hearts of those from whom they have received great benefits, or whom they have ardently loved—when I think, for instance, of the feelings of a wife at the sight of the heart of a well-beloved husband, who, dying far away from her, has left it to be sent to her as a pledge of his love; or of those of a favourite, a courtier, a subject who, after having been during the lifetime of his prince loaded with favours by him, receives after his death the gift of his heart as a last mark of his love: when I think with what respect and gratitude, with what tender affection, with what outbursts of feeling they receive these valued treasures; with what care they keep them, with what honours, what lavish outlay, what magnificence they enshrine them in mausoleums, to be kept in remembrance for ever; when I think, I say, of this feeling on the part of men for the hearts of their benefactors, their protectors, and their friends —a feeling at once so just and so widespread among them, I am pained at being obliged to convince by arguments Christians, ransomed with the Blood of the Man-God, that the Heart of their adorable Redeemer —which He Himself by the institution of the devotion of which we are treating presents to them as a pledge of His love—is an object worthy of their most loving and most ardent devotion.

Consider, then, you who read these reflections, consider and call to mind that we are here treating of the Heart of Jesus Christ, that is to say, the Heart of your Saviour, your King, your God, your Friend, your Brother, your Father, the Spouse of your soul, and of a Benefactor who has heaped upon you infinite benefits; consider that this Divine Heart is presented to you still burning with the love it bears you, and filled with those generous feelings of goodness and mercy to which you owe your redemption; remember that it is the very same Heart that has felt so keenly all your miseries, that has been so cruelly afflicted for your sins, and that has formed so many burning desires for your happiness. But above all, consider it as suffering for love of you in the Passion sorrows so keen, that we may say with truth, that it alone had to suffer more hardships and more torments than all the rest of the Body of Jesus suffered in the exterior part of His Passion; for it is generally believed that the interior sufferings of Jesus Christ were more bitter than the exterior. Now these interior sufferings were all the portion of His Heart. It was in His Heart, as in their centre, that all the afflictions of His Soul were united. All that sadness, even unto death, which Jesus suffered in the Garden; all that abandonment by His Father which wrung from Him that mysterious complaint: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" all that immense sorrow which He felt for the sins of all men, all the weariness and fear with which He was overwhelmed, all that was

painful and terrible in His unparalleled agony and sweat of blood—all this was the chalice that belonged peculiarly to His Heart. It was inundated with an immense sea of sorrows; it was plunged in torrents of inconceivable bitterness; its affliction was in a certain sense infinite. Oh, who could represent with sufficient vividness the suffering state of the Heart of Jesus, pierced by so many shafts! Angel of the Most High, who wast chosen by the eternal Father to comfort that Heart in its agony, why cannot you, for the glory of the Sacred Heart and the instruction and edification of the Church, present us with a picture of what you then beheld with wonder! Ah! how soon we should be convinced by that spectacle that this Divine Heart, abandoned to the severity of Divine Justice, was reduced to a far more pitiable state than was His Sacred Body when given up to the cruelty of His executioners and the fury of the demons. The Holy Spirit had in more than one place by His Prophets predicted these sufferings of the Heart of Jesus: "My Heart is become like wax melting in the midst of my bowels."* "My Heart hath expected reproach and misery, and I looked for one that would grieve together with Me, but there was none."† "My Heart hath forsaken Me."‡ Where, then, is the Christian so hard-hearted and unnatural as to be able to restrain his compassion, his sorrow, his love, his tender gratitude, in a word, his devotion

* Psalm xxi. 15. † Psalm lxviii. 21.
‡ Psalm xxxix. 13.

towards the Heart of Jesus on contemplating it in the state we have just described? Alas! if in His Passion we cannot contemplate His Sacred Body, bruised, torn, and covered with wounds, and His hands and feet pierced with nails for the love of us, without feeling ourselves penetrated with a tender love for that adorable Flesh, those sacred feet, those Divine hands; if we are never tired of adoring them, kissing them, watering them with our tears, how can we look on the adorable Heart of our loving Redeemer, pierced by so many cruel shafts, torn by so many mortal sorrows, and laid open upon the Cross by the thrust of a lance, without feeling ourselves moved to the very depths of our hearts and touched with the most tender devotion?

Now it is this Divine Heart, such as we have just described it, that Jesus Christ Himself presents to us to-day, and, as it were, makes us a special gift of it by the establishment of the devotion that He has revealed to us. He could not give us His Heart in any other manner, as it was not fitting that He should leave it to us separated from His Body. He does, nevertheless, in a certain way present it to us separately from the rest of His Humanity, wishing that in the practice of this devotion our thoughts and feelings should have His Heart for their object and end, and that we should thus give the Divine Heart all those marks of respect and love which we would give it if we really possessed it separately from His Body. Let us suppose for a moment that Jesus had

left this precious relic of Himself to His Church as a pledge of His love, and that there was one temple in the world enriched with this treasure. What in such a case would not be the devotion of the faithful to the Sacred Heart? Would not men come from all parts of the world to adore it? Would they ever find marks of honour striking enough, or sufficiently magnificent and loving to satisfy the zeal and affection of the people? What crowds should we not see filling the sanctuary that was fortunate enough to possess this Divine relic! With what pomp and joy would not the feast be celebrated! How eager would Christians be to go to visit it, how great would be their devotion, their ardent desire to see it, to adore it, to kiss it. But if one might so justly entertain these feelings for the Heart of Jesus, separated from the rest of the Body, and senseless and dead, ought we to be without them now when Jesus Christ presents that same Heart to us, full of life, full of that love for us which would make it so worthy of our affection and veneration, even if we possessed it in a state in which it would be deprived of life and sensation? Can it be that the union which His Divine Heart maintains with the rest of His Body, the life it enjoys, and the love with which it still burns, deprive it of a portion of its excellence and of some of its titles to our veneration and love? We might perhaps find an excuse for not practising a special devotion to the Sacred Heart, if Jesus Christ Himself did not invite us to it, for in that case we

perhaps might not have thought of it; but since our beloved Redeemer has had the goodness to specially set before us His Sacred Heart to be the object of our adoration and our devotion, the considerations we have here proposed must be allowed their full force, and should suffice to draw all hearts to it.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE EXCELLENCE OF THE END PROPOSED IN THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART.

THE end proposed to us in the Devotion to the Sacred Heart, is reparation for the injuries offered to our Lord, and for those He still suffers daily in the Sacrament of His love. That we may rightly understand the excellence of this end, we must consider, first, the immense love of our Lord for men; and, secondly, the ingratitude with which this love is repaid. In this return of black ingratitude to love which is unequalled, we may understand how just is the reparation exacted by our Lord from faithful souls.

ARTICLE I.

On the Love of Jesus for Men.

Jesus Christ, desiring to make known the love of His Father for men, makes use of these admirable words which represent with an energy quite divine all that can be said of the greatness of this love: "God hath so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but have eternal life."* Let us apply these Divine words to our Lord Himself—never could application be

* St. John iii. 16.

more appropriate—and thus express His own love for men: "Jesus so loved men that He gave Himself up to death, that those who believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Who is it that loves? Who are those who are loved? With what and how much love has He loved them? What has He done to prove His love to them? Let us devote a few minutes to this point.

Jesus, the only Son of God, equal to the Father, a God like Himself, loved man. What is man by nature in the sight of God? Dust and ashes. But what did he become through sin? The enemy of God, the slave of the demon, condemned to eternal death, plunged into an abyss of blindness and corruption—such was man. In this condition, deserving only the contempt and hatred of the Saint of saints, Jesus loved him, and formed the design of rescuing him from the evils which beset him, and of bestowing on him infinite benefits. But in what way did He manifest the greatness of His love? This it is which passes all understanding and force of expression. Jesus loved man ardently, tenderly, and, if we may use the expression, with transport. He carried His love to an excess almost unworthy of Him. He did for man what never man did for another—what a slave would not have done for his master, nor a son for his father—what even the most infatuated lover would not have done for the object of his passion. Men were the enemies of God, and subject to the rigour of His justice. This was

their greatest evil, and the source of all the others. What did Jesus to deliver them from it? He offered Himself to His Father for these criminals, to bear in their stead the torments they had merited; and the Eternal Father having accepted the sacrifice, Jesus accomplished it in a manner which created astonishment both in Heaven and on earth. He sacrificed Himself for men with a Divine generosity—for them He sacrificed His glory, His repose, His life. He came down from Heaven for them. After laying aside His grandeur, He embraced a life of poverty, of humiliation, of persecution, and of suffering, having in view the good of mankind, so that all which He did and suffered was for them. Every instant of His sublime life was devoted to their welfare. His every action, His every word, every tear He shed, every desire He formed were for men. This was not enough—He must offer the greatest, the most stupendous proof of love. To die for those we love is the highest degree which love can attain, and to this height rose the love of Jesus—He died for men! What death did He die? Ah, forget it not; forget not the opprobrium and the torments of His Passion, of the Cross on which He willed to die; be overwhelmed with horror at the spectacle of a God reduced to so pitiable a state out of love for men. Such has been the love of Jesus Christ for us—a love the most sincere, disinterested, ardent, tender, generous, and faithful. To this love we owe all that we are, all that we have, all that we hope for. If God called us out

of chaos, made us His children, and prepared for us a glory which is eternal, it is solely owing to the love of Jesus.

This reflection gives rise to a second. What amount of gratitude might our Lord not reasonably expect from men when, after so much love and so many benefits, He re-appears amongst them in the Sacrament of the Altar? That we may the better feel and understand this, let us, after the example of the Fathers of the Church, assist our weakness by a few appropriate comparisons. Represent to yourself a great king, who having loaded with benefits a small body of his subjects in a distant province, finds them in revolt and with arms in their hands having basely deserted him. These traitors fall soon after into the power of a tyrant, who, finding them unprotected and helpless, despoils them, and reduces them to a cruel servitude, where they suffer the just reward of their treason. Under these circumstances, let us suppose this king, actuated by an unheard-of clemency, forgives the injury he has received, and, touched with compassion for these wretches, forms a plan to rescue them from this oppression and restore them to liberty. If, in the execution of this design, he himself takes up arms, undergoes the perils and fatigues of a long war, goes himself to battle, exposes his sacred person to the attacks of his enemies; and by his wisdom and valour, and a long series of labours, conquers the tyrant, and incapacitates him from ever again injuring his people; how would his people

act if this generous prince after the victory, still covered with the blood shed in their defence, should show himself to them, and, crowning the benefits already lavished on them, should pardon their revolt, re-establish them in their former rights, and dwell amongst them, that he might be better able to bestow daily favours on them, would there be hearts hard enough to resist being touched by so much goodness, that would not strive in every way to prove their gratitude? Again, picture to yourself a friend, who, to deliver his friend from death, offers to die for him, and, in fact, does die for him. How could a man act who had received such a proof of affection? If such a one came to our knowledge, what should we say, what should we feel?

If you who read this had been the object of such generosity, if being compromised in a treasonable offence and condemned to a cruel death, you found a friend generous and faithful, who having tried in vain to deliver you, should offer himself and die in your stead, and after much intercession obtained your pardon only on this condition, that he came to you in prison, released you from irons to be placed on himself; if you saw him led to execution, mount the scaffold, and lose his life at the hands of the executioner; if this friend died to save your life at the price of his own, and to leave you this signal proof of the sincerity and the ardour of his love, what would you say? Could you witness it without emotion, without tears? Could your heart restrain

its feelings of love and gratitude? Could you ever forget such a friend, or recall his memory without emotion? "O faithful friend," you would exclaim, "O generous, O incomparable friend! how can I ever repay the debt I owe you?" But (mark well what I am about to say) if by some miracle this friend were restored to you alive, what would you not do for him, what might he not expect from you?

The application of these parables is self-evident: any attentive reader will have already made it. But, alas! how insufficiently they express what Jesus has done for men! they retrace but imperfectly His love and His benefits. Never king did for his people, nor friend for friend, what we have described: but if they had, they would have been but men, suffering for other men. Thou alone, O Jesus, didst carry love to such an excess; and Thou art God. Thou art the magnanimous Sovereign, Who to deliver Thy subjects from the tyranny under which they groaned, and to which their revolt against Thyself had reduced them, touched with compassion for their misery, didst undergo ceaseless labours, didst expose Thy Sacred Person to the assaults of their enemies, didst fight for them even to the shedding of Thy Blood, didst vanquish the tyrant who kept them in bondage; from whom Thou didst release them that Thou mightest restore them to the liberty of the children of God. Thou art that faithful Friend Who gavest Thy life for Thy friends. Thou didst implore mercy for us, and it was granted Thee only on condition

that Thou shouldst satisfy for us. And what satisfaction was required? Torments the most cruel, insults the most humiliating, death on the Cross: that was the price at which Thou wert permitted to redeem us. But these conditions, so hard and so seemingly unworthy of Thy grandeur, did not deter Thee. Thou didst accept all that was exacted, ready even to suffer more for us if necessary; Thou didst subject Thyself voluntarily to torture, to death on the Cross, rejoicing to procure for us by the sacrifice of Thyself, the immense benefits Thou desirest for us.

Ah! Lord, what then shall these men do for Thee whom Thou didst love with such excess of love? What return can they make for so great graces, for such great love? Alas! when Thou sufferedst for them they knew Thee not, and only offered outrages in return for benefits.

But now that Thou art known, that Christians recognize Who Thou art, and what Thy love has been, what will not a people so cherished do to manifest their love and gratitude? One wish might have remained unsatisfied: Thy presence among them—to possess Thee and thus to be able to prove their love and gratitude. Ah! if they could venture to hope for this favour, what excess of happiness for them! and if any one grace were wanting, could they ask for any other? Return then amongst us, O adorable Saviour! Come, O King of Love! Come and bestow on Thy people the greatest consolation

they can receive! What spot in the whole universe couldst Thou choose for Thy dwelling, in which Thou wouldst be more honoured and more loved? Jesus has anticipated these desires; of His own free will He has done what we ask; He has returned amongst us; He has taken up His abode with us, not for a short time only, but till the end of all things. He has done even more than this—something we should not have dared to ask, nor even to have contemplated.

In thus dwelling amongst us, He willed to unite Himself with us in a way as intimate as it is incomprehensible; and, to bring this about, His love conceived the most astounding prodigy that could enter into the mind of the Man-God. He instituted the Sacrament of the Altar, and shutting Himself up under the appearance of bread, He enters into our hearts and makes His own Flesh our nourishment. O wonderful effect of love! O ineffable excess of the charity of Christ! This gift exceeds all others; and renders Him, all powerful as He is, unable, as it were, to do more! Behold Him then in our midst, this great and good Master! behold Him as full of love and goodness as ever; and able to receive in person the marks of respect, love, and gratitude which we wish to offer Him. Our yearnings are satisfied; we possess the Divine Spouse of our souls, and we possess Him in a manner which ought to render Him still more dear, more loveable; for, in this mystery of love He gives Himself to us without reserve; even

leaving to us the care of His Person, to provide Him a dwelling, to build Him temples, to raise altars, to adorn these temples and altars, to provide all that is requisite for His worship, to keep Him company, and form His court. He desires no other ministers or courtiers than ourselves; He is in our midst for us alone; He belongs to us alone. He will receive honours and gifts only from us. Oh, happy Christians! what a source of happiness for you! Shout for joy, ye people well beloved, and let your hearts indulge in the transporting delight which the possession of your beloved Master, and the power you possess of approaching Him and manifesting your love for Him, must cause you. Manifest your zeal in every possible way, let it be as unlimited as that which our Lord Himself has shown in His love and benefits.

Have I spoken too strongly? Are these sentiments overdrawn, and can we help feeling in these reflections the grandeur and the love of our Lord, and all that He has a right to expect from the gratitude of men in the Sacrament of our altars? Let us then now consider the effects of this gratitude, or rather, let us contrast the bitterest ingratitude with the greatest love.

Article II.

The ingratitude of Men.

Wherever we cast our eyes we meet with sad proofs of this ingratitude. I travel in spirit throughout the universe, I survey all Christian nations, conditions,

states, places, and everywhere I find our Lord exposed in the Blessed Sacrament to injuries and contempt. In the first place, I behold a large portion of the Christian world plunged in heresy, denying His presence in this mystery, and thus inflicting on His Divine Heart the most painful outrage that can be offered to a heart that loves, viz., refusing even to recognize a benefit conferred. Then again, reflect having thus disowned this adorable Benefactor in the Eucharist, to what excess did they not carry their insults to His Sacred Body! This remembrance must fill us with horror. Hell itself never inspired the Jews with greater hatred and fury against our Lord, than have been entertained by heretics against Him in the Eucharist. It was a small thing to pillage the temples in which He dwelt, to profane them, to demolish and burn them, to throw down the altars and tabernacles; to strangle the priests, to break and defile the sacred vessels: they lifted their sacrilegious hands on the ciborium and the Sacred Host; they cast them down, trampled on them, and put them to execrable uses. O Jesus! was it for this that Thou didst will to dwell amongst men? We shudder at the recital of these abominations; but there is another feeling which ought properly to correct our thoughts. It was for us individually that Jesus suffered these outrages; He foresaw them when He instituted this mystery, and yet His love would not be discouraged. Here then is a fresh motive for love and gratitude towards this amiable Redeemer.

Banished from many places which through love He had made His dwelling, He finds Himself left to Catholics only. You possess Him, you alone, O faithful people, and from you alone can He expect the gratitude which is due to Him. Oh! if in satisfaction of so sweet and legitimate a duty, one so worthy of loving hearts, the zeal of Catholics should carry them to excess, can we be surprised? If even we occupied ourselves night and day in pondering on the love of our good Master in the Holy Sacrament; if we incessantly frequented the places where He dwells, to bask in the bliss of His presence and to pay Him court; if we entered these holy places only on our knees, and remained there with our faces bowed in the dust through respect for Him; if we made an offering to Him of all that we hold most precious and consecrated it to His worship in the Holy Eucharist, should we do too much—would anything come up to that which His love and benefits demand from us?

Ah! what must be then the astonishment and consternation expressed by a faithful soul who attentively considers the real state of things; and the treatment which our Lord receives, even from Catholics, in this mystery of His love! To what poverty, to what neglect do they abandon Him! What cold indifference they manifest towards Him! Even the most ordinary duties of respect and gratitude are omitted in His regard—omissions amounting even to the most scandalous irreverence, even to

profanation and sacrilege! O God, what scenes rise before me, and who can express all that a Christian heart must feel at the sight of the ingratitude I have depicted? O Divine Master! behold a still more grievous source of sorrow to Thy Heart! It is not from Jews, infidels, heretics that Thou receivest these insults, but from Thine own chosen people, the people who acknowledge Thee for their God, who profess to believe in Thy Real Presence; they it is who are guilty of these outrages. In the details which the end I have in view oblige me to give, aid my weakness, and give to my words the influence which I can hope for alone from Thy Spirit; cause this ungrateful people to be sensible of the reproaches they merit.

And firstly, one mark of ingratitude which I have observed is the penury of those places in which our Lord makes His dwelling. Nothing should be too costly to enrich and crown these places, or at least to keep them with proper decency. But alas! we find numbers of them so destitute, so neglected, so deserted, that we could say with truth our Lord is lodged amongst Christians, more poorly, more miserably, than the poor themselves. In fact, how often do we see churches in the country, in villages, even in towns, where through the cupidity and negligence of those in whose care they are, the Body of our Lord is kept in a way to disgrace religion!

Let me be permitted here to express what I have felt more than once, and what every faithful heart

must equally have felt even more intensely, when on several occasions, and particularly when travelling, I have entered these poor churches which we meet with so frequently in Christian countries, to find them more like hovels than the house of God, empty, deserted, bare, and totally devoid of all adornment; and then, casting my wondering eyes towards the different parts of these sacred buildings, I beheld on one side buildings in ruin, thatched roofs, walls eaten away, windows broken and admitting the rain and wind, floors covered with dirt; and then turning towards the altars and tabernacles, I behold them covered with paltry ornaments, worn and torn, such as a respectable person would be ashamed to wear; the altar linen and even the sacred vessels, so dirty as to horrify one. Alas, Lord! I have exclaimed with sighs, is this then the place of Thy abode? Is this, O King of glory, the place where Thou abidest night and day? Is this the care taken of Thy house and Thy Person? Are these the ornaments with which Christians adorn Thee? Is it possible that they know, see, and suffer Thee to remain thus neglected. We shall perhaps be told that our Lord is not so treated everywhere, that there are superb temples, magnificently adorned; this may be true, but is He on that account the less ill-provided for in the places I have described?

There is yet another mark of ingratitude which must be still more wounding to the Heart of our Lord than even the penury I have described; I mean the

neglect and oblivion manifested towards Him in His temples; for He is really and truly abandoned by a large majority of the faithful: it is as if they were ignorant of His presence; they treat Him as though He were not there. One of the usual duties shown by people towards those whom they respect are visits; it is an ordinary habit: they daily visit their relations, their friends, their benefactors; they pay court to the great, to their superiors, their masters, with constant assiduity, and these visits are looked upon as indispensable.

Jesus Christ is our Master, our King, our God, our Redeemer, our Benefactor, our Friend, our Father; these titles merit from us extreme devotion. He is in our midst, we know it, and yet He is the only one Whom we forget! Who ever thinks of visiting Jesus Christ? who pays attention to this duty? We allow months, years, our whole life to pass without fulfilling it. I am aware that we frequent the church and fulfil our other religious duties; but I maintain that we do not go in that spirit which should alone characterize the visit—that is to say, through motives of love, or gratitude, or respect, with the especial intention of rendering homage to our Lord, and giving Him the proof of the remembrance in which we hold His love and goodness to us.

To this second mark of ingratitude we may add another, and it is this: Our Lord daily honours our streets with His presence, either in processions, or when He is taken to the sick. Where are the attend-

ants who ought to be around Him? are we only to see the dregs of the populace in His train? The wealthy never appear; one would suppose they were ashamed of filling an office in which even the Seraphim would glory.

But we have still bitterer complaints to make. The Real Presence of our Lord in our churches demands respect and modesty worthy of His Sovereign Majesty; but how is this indispensable duty observed? Every one knows what occurs in this respect; it is a matter of daily wonder. We enter the church with less concern than we do the drawing-room of some great personage. We conduct ourselves with less modesty in the presence of Jesus Christ than we should in that of an earthly prince. We stand up, or we sit in an unseemly posture. We look about us with careless indifference, which proves how far removed are our hearts and thoughts from Jesus Christ. We talk in church, we laugh, we discuss the news of the day, or our business matters, as freely as if we were in some place of amusement. Mothers permit their children to misconduct themselves in a manner that would not be tolerated elsewhere. I am ashamed of entering into such details; oh, that they might bring a blush of shame to the faces of those who force me to describe them! Irreverence is carried to such a pitch, that even animals are allowed in the churches, causing disturbance which would alarm our faith if it were not all but extinguished.

A church is the house of God, sanctified by the

real and abiding presence of Jesus Christ, our Sovereign Lord and Master, dedicated solely to prayer, contemplation, and the most sacred and awful functions of religion; and we dare to admit animals which can only interrupt divine service, and disturb the devotion of the faithful by their noise and constant movement, and often also by horrors which rend the heart of pious souls, and ought to excite indignation against those who cause the scandal. What is most astonishing is, that people look on unmoved, as if habit had hardened them to such scenes. Heathens would hardly credit it. They are more reverent in the temples of their false gods. I keep back many other acts of exterior irreverence, but if I could penetrate into the interior, and unveil what goes on in the hearts of many of the faithful, I should reveal still greater abominations.

O my God, can this be the house of the Lord! is this the spot sacred and terrible to the angels themselves! Is this the abode of Him before Whom the Seraphim tremble with reverence?

What shall I say now of Communion and Mass? Our Lord gives Himself to us in Communion with intense love; it is the crowning effort of His infinite charity. What response is made to this love? how do we approach Him, with what aversion, what constraint, what repugnance! it is necessary to enforce it under pain of damnation. How many approach sacrilegiously, and do not shrink from offering our Lord a kiss which renews the crime of the traitor

Judas! With regard to Mass, how is it celebrated, how attended? How do those who say Mass acquit themselves of this awful ministry? One would say, that Mass was one of those ordinary functions that one learns to perform with indifference, and without thinking of what one was doing. What preparation do we make before going to the Altar? what reverence do we show when we handle the Sacred Host? Our hand should tremble with awe when touching it. But we touch it, and carry it from one place to another, and go through the sacred ceremony with as little respect and attention as though it were a piece of bread. We make a merit of hurrying through Mass; thus showing plainly our anxiety to get it over. Is it credible that a ministry so noble, so exalted, so divine, in which we hold in our hands the Son of God, and offer Him in sacrifice to the glory of His Father, should ever weary the ministers chosen for its exercise! And those of the faithful who assist at this Sacrifice, they may share in these just reproaches; they are guilty of an indolence, of an indifference, a languor, which are marvellous. What faith do they bring with them, what reverence, what devotion, what love?

The greater number neglect to attend, the most trifling cause serves as an excuse to stay away; and even when present, they are weary, distracted, the Mass is never short enough; and, while our Lord immolates Himself for them, one short half hour to assist at the Sacrifice appears to them insupportable

But let us have done with these details. It is evident that wherever we turn our eyes we see clear proofs of the little love, respect, and gratitude, that are felt for our Lord; on the contrary, we only see indifference, ingratitude, and contempt. It is thus that Christians respond to the love of our Lord, it is thus they repay all His benefits. Words fail me here to express my feelings; would that in their stead I could shed torrents of tears to deplore such monstrous hard-heartedness. In my grief I exclaim with the Prophet:* "O beloved and adorable Redeemer, who will give water to my head and a fountain of tears to my eyes, and I will weep day and night for the contempt shown to Thy love and the ingratitude with which Thy benefits are repaid!" O ye angels, who crowd the sanctuaries in which dwells the Divine Spouse of our souls; who, in our default cease not to pour forth at the foot of His altars, the most profound homage, who consume yourselves in the pure flames of His love; angels of peace, who are witnesses of all that I describe, and who, in the language of Scripture, weep bitterly the insults offered to God,† ah! why can ye not groan and speak for me, and supply for my inability to express the feelings of my heart on this subject?

I will make a final effort to soften these hard hearts, by briefly repeating as earnestly as I can all that I have said in this chapter. Would that I could make my voice resound, that it might be heard wherever there are Christians capable of entertaining feel-

* Jerem. ix. 1. † Isaias xxxiii. 7.

ings of equity, reason, and humanity, that they might be overwhelmed with horror at such monstrous inhumanity, and covered with such salutary confusion as to arouse them from their indifference. Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, the Ruler of the world, the Sovereign of angels and of men, the Creator of the universe, but more especially the God of Christians, their King, their Father, their Brother, their Saviour; this same Jesus Who, through excess of love, descended from Heaven for them, became Man, and devoted every instant of His life to their salvation; Who willed to die on the Cross to deliver them from Hell and open to them Heaven; this Jesus, by another act of His immense love, is come a second time amongst them; has made His abode in their midst; and, that He may never be separated from them, has instituted the Sacrament of our altars, where He dwells actually, corporally, and perpetually. Behold Him in their city, at their very doors, and often abiding under the same roof with them; and yet He is not loved, He is forgotten, abandoned, despised, insulted. O ye Heavens, stand amazed at such marvellous ingratitude! and you, inhabitants of the earth, shudder with indignation! Pagan nations, if this recital could ever reach your ears, what would you say of us? Who are these Christians, these monsters? where is this barbarous nation? In what frightful climate, under what sky of adamant do they live? What! to be insensible to the love of a God, a love so great! To manifest ingratitude for benefits so

great, and even to forget the Benefactor, and even to insult Him! Can this be man! is He not worse than wild animals? O Jesus, Whose Heart, the tenderest and most generous that ever lived, was also the most susceptible to ingratitude, what grief for Thee! could a more cruel wound be inflicted on this loving Heart? Make known Thy complaints, O Sacred Heart! May they strike and penetrate our hearts?

Article III.

The just complaints of Jesus Christ.

These complaints were made by our Lord to the dearly loved spouse of whom we have spoken, and He wished them to be made known to the entire Church: "Discovering to me His Divine Heart . . . Behold this Heart which has so loved men that it spared nothing, even exhausting and consuming itself to manifest to them its love." "Come My spouse; contemplate Me in the condition to which My love for men has reduced Me. Touched by their misery, and the evils to which they were subjected, I wished to deliver them; and, without regarding My own interest, I voluntarily abdicated the glory which was Mine; I descended from Heaven; I annihilated Myself; I reduced Myself to the position of a slave; making Myself as one of them in all things; I assumed a body subject to their miseries; I passed My life in labours and suffering; I endured all that poverty, watchings, hunger, thirst, cold and heat, all that the hatred

of men could inflict upon Me. This was not all; the justice of My Father required something more. It was necessary that I should shed My Blood and resign My life in cruel torment. This did not cool My love; I gave up My Body to the bonds, the blows, the affronts, the spittings, the scourges, the thorns, the nails; I permitted it to be inhumanly torn and ill-treated; I shed My Blood even to the last drop; finally, sinless, God as I was, I was fastened to the Cross, and died on it for sinners, for slaves, for My own creatures! I might have saved them at a less cost: one drop of My Blood, one tear would have sufficed; but that would not have satisfied My love: I must make known to them its greatness by the greatness of My sufferings; infinite love exacted some sign proportioned to its infinity. I have done for men something which should move them still more: I have given them My Flesh to eat and My Blood to drink, in order to unite Myself to them so closely, that I should become, in a manner, one with them. This ought to be sufficient to soften their hearts, and to inspire them with sentiments of love and gratitude. But, alas! for the greater number, I have laboured in vain: these men, whom My Heart has so loved, not only make no return, but 'from most of them I only meet with ingratitude, through the contempt, the irreverence, the sacrileges, and the indifference they show to Me in this Sacrament of love. And, what is still more disheartening, by hearts which are

consecrated to Me.' Then, My Heart may complain in this mystery, as it did upon the Cross, that it is exposed to ignominy and grief, without consolation:* In this desolation, it seeks for solace in thee and in a chosen number of faithful souls: it expects that when on the altar, sensible of the insults offered to it, you should condole with it, and offer reparation for these injuries by your homage. But that you may know specially how to carry out so urgent a duty, My Heart desires that the first Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi should be set apart as a special festival in honour of My Heart, that worthy reparation should be made by communicating on that day, to make amends for the indignities it received while exposed on the altars."

Faithful souls, who read and reflect upon this, what answer can you make to the great and touching complaints of your Redeemer? Can you hear them without emotion, and without the desire to satisfy the requirements of His Heart? Perhaps it may not be at your hands that He has received such insults, but consider that it is not sufficient for you to abstain from outraging Him, it is for you to share in the insults offered by others, to manifest your grief, and to make every reparation in your power.

Would it be sufficient for a son who saw his father ill-treated, merely to abstain from joining those who injured him? Would it not be his duty to prevent this ill-treatment by every means in his power? or

* Psalm lxviii. 21.

at least to make amends, as far as possible, for the injuries done him? What! shall we show less zeal for Jesus Christ than we should for a father, for a friend? I, who could not see a friend ill-treated, especially if in my service, without showing my regret, and making every effort to repair the injury, can I witness atrocious crimes committed against my Saviour without being touched? Can I know that my Lord is exposed, for love of me and my interests, to a thousand indignities; that in the Holy Sacrament He has endured all that the fury of demons could suggest to Jews and heretics; that they have pierced His Body in the Sacred Hosts; they have consigned it to the flames; have trampled it under foot; and daily dishonour it by a thousand profanations, a thousand sacrileges: and can I remain unmoved, as though it concerned me not, as if our Lord were nothing to me! Ah, Lord, sooner than be guilty of such unworthy cowardice, may I cease to live, sooner may my heart be torn from my body, than be capable of such sinful hard-heartedness.

I will then join those souls that love Thee; I will unite myself to those, who, touched by devotion to Thy Sacred Heart, consider it a duty to offer reparation for so many outrages; I will prostrate myself at Thy feet in this mystery of love; I will weep for Thy love so little valued, and bathe with my tears those holy places where Thou didst receive these outrages; I will make that honourable reparation to Thy Divine Heart which it so justly requires, and

shall consider it a happiness and a signal favour that Thou wouldst receive me, thus humbled at Thy feet. After these reflections, may I be permitted to ask whether we can conceive anything more just, more holy, more worthy of a Christian soul, than the feelings we have endeavoured to excite? whether a devotion, whose chief aim it is to crown these feelings, can be otherwise than solid and conformable to true piety? whether, in short, a festival which was established for the object of paying to the Heart of our Lord honour so justly due, is not worthy to take its place amongst those already instituted for the glory of Jesus Christ, and the edification of the faithful?

The Church consecrates each year one entire week to honour the sufferings of our Lord in His Passion; she endeavours during these sacred days to compensate by her grief and the honours paid to Jesus suffering, and even to the instrument of His agony, the outrages which He then received for us. Nothing can be more just and praiseworthy than this institution. But our Lord does not love us less in the Eucharist than in His Passion, He has not been less outraged in this Mystery of His love, than in that of His Death. What then can be more just than to establish a festival in reparation for these injuries, and to excite the faithful to discharge publicly a duty so holy? and what can at the same time be more suitable than to consecrate this festival to His Sacred Heart, which was at once the instrument and the seat of His love and His sufferings?

CHAPTER III.

ON THE VIRTUES CONTAINED IN THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF OUR LORD, AND THE FRUITS IT POSSESSES.

THESE are the two final counts by which we determine the excellence of a devotion. It will not be necessary to stop to discuss them, after what we have said in the preceding chapters; for we have abundant evidence that the devotion to the Heart of our Lord contains, on the one hand, all that is most perfect in interior virtue, it being a continual exercise of faith, adoration, love, thanksgiving, grief, reparation, &c. And on the other hand, it contains the holiest external practices of religion: viz., visiting churches, with that amount however of exemplary piety that is calculated to make reparation for the irreverence of those Christians who desecrate them; hearing Mass in the same spirit and with the same recollectedness; approaching frequently the holy table; accompanying the Blessed Sacrament; reciting prayers that fill our hearts with love and gratitude for our Lord.

These are the chief acts inculcated in this devotion. There is evidently nothing in all this but what is holy. These are not frivolous ceremonies, or vain, outward show of piety, which flatter one's vanity and self-love,

or temporarily excite the popular devotion. All here is solid, true, simple, interior, in a word, conformable to true Christian piety; and we may venture to say that we shall hardly find another devotion in the Church, which, in every respect, is purer, more solid, excellent, and worthy of our Lord and of a faithful soul. As to the fruits to be produced by this devotion, we may easily judge of them, not only because the exercise of the virtues of which we have spoken cannot fail to fill the soul with infinite graces, but also from two other considerations, to which I will briefly allude. And first, we cannot practise devotion to the Sacred Heart for any length of time without feeling ourselves inflamed with love for this adorable Redeemer, this love being the special fruit of this devotion. Now, in fact, everything in it expresses love; its object is simply love; its aim is to make reparation for insults shown to love; its practice, acts of love. Besides, love for our Lord may be acquired (1) by prayer—asking it of God with earnest prayer; (2) by practising and offering to God some work which is pleasing to Him, thereby inducing Him, as a reward, to bestow on us this love, the most precious of His gifts; (3) by employing proper means to excite this love in ourselves, such as the remembrance and the consideration of the perfections of our Lord, His love, His benefits. Now we may safely assert that there is no devotion so calculated to acquire the perfect love of Jesus Christ as that of His Sacred Heart; for, in the first place, it inculcates a constant

remembrance and attentive consideration of that which excites love, viz., the remembrance and the consideration of the love and the goodness of our Lord. In the second place, there is nothing which the worshippers of the Heart of Jesus pray for oftener or more earnestly than this Divine love; it is the object of their desires and the end aimed at in their exercises. In the third place, if, to obtain this precious gift of the love of our Lord, we try to consider what we can do most pleasing to God and most likely to draw down His mercy on ourselves, it is certain, from all we have brought forward, that devotion to the Sacred Heart is of infinite value in His sight. We have, on this point, the consolation of knowing that we have the words of our Lord Himself in the revelation which has been preserved; for we find this promise expressly stated: "I promise thee that My Heart shall enlarge itself, to shed abundantly the influences of its Divine love on those who shall themselves show this honour to it and obtain it from others."

The second consideration which may convince us how efficacious is this devotion in procuring precious graces from our Lord, may be gathered from the object it has in view. And here I shall make but one reflection. If during the Passion, when our Lord abandoned by all His friends, and given up to the fury of His enemies, was suffering cruel outrages, some one faithful disciple had openly acknowledged Him, and had gloried in recognizing Him as His Lord and Master; had followed Him faithfully, taking

part in His tears, His grief, His ignominy; omitting nothing that could solace Him in His suffering; what effect do you suppose such fidelity would have had on the Heart of Jesus Christ? with what graces would it not have been rewarded? Consider now, that the injuries our Lord endured in His Passion are renewed in the Sacrament of the Altar, as we have already asserted. In this sacrament He has been forsaken by His own, rejected, ill-treated, persecuted, overwhelmed with injuries and outrages; and these outrages are renewed day by day. If now some faithful disciples are to be found, who, seeing their Divine Master thus abandoned and despised, touched with sorrow, make it their duty to repair the negligence, the forgetfulness, the coldness, the irreverence, the sacrileges of others, by their homage, assiduity, modesty, and fervour, who does not see that their work of love cannot fail to be acceptable to the Heart of our Lord, and must consequently be an unfailing source of His most precious graces?

APPENDIX.

We have undertaken to prove separately two points which are of importance to the subject we have been discussing. The first has reference to the admirable impressions made by grace on the hearts of the saints, and of the part which the heart takes in the operations of the Holy Spirit and the favours of the Divine Spouse. The second concerns the wound in the Heart of our Lord, so calculated to excite devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Article I.

Which vindicates through the experience and the testimony of the saints, what has been said of the part taken by the heart in the extraordinary ways of grace; of the wonderful impression made by Divine love upon the heart; of the workings of the Holy Ghost upon the heart; and the favours conferred upon pure souls by our Lord, through the medium of His Sacred Heart; and finally, it treats of the sentiments which these souls entertain towards this adorable Heart.

In order to convince those who have difficulty in believing these extraordinary things, we can bring forward no stronger evidence than the testimony of

the saints themselves, who have experienced and bear witness to their effects, either by their writings, or through statements which they were compelled to make to those to whom they owed obedience. We have already stated many proofs in the body of this work, and we shall bring forward others in the third part; but we have thought it right to give here a separate selection, which contains such unanswerable evidence, that it is impossible to resist it. Now, if people little versed in these matters, or who yield too much to human wisdom, remain unconvinced, and without profit, we may at least feel certain that devout and interior souls, whom we have principally in view, will derive edification and consolation. We must here observe that in the selections we are about to give, it has not been necessary to make any deep research. We have chosen them at hazard from the lives of the saints, both men and women, which we happened to have at hand; and in nearly all of them we found the proof we sought, so that we may feel pretty sure they are equally to be found in the lives of other saints, if we take the trouble to read them. It appears to us that the action of the Holy Spirit is pretty nearly the same in the case of all these favoured souls.

St. Gertrude.

We have already spoken elsewhere of the admirable sentiments of this Saint for the Sacred Heart of our

Lord; we shall confine ourselves here to that which regards her own heart. In book ii. chap. iv. of her Life,* the Saint thus expresses herself: "In the first or second year of my religious life, I one day found in a book this short prayer: 'My Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, grant me the grace to soar towards Thee with all the affection of my heart; imprint, O most merciful Lord, with Thy precious Blood, Thy Sacred Wounds in my heart, that I may therein see Thy sufferings and Thy love.' I made use of this prayer with great delight and often repeated it. Shortly after, being at Vespers, and my mind more than ordinarily occupied with these matters, I felt that the favour I had asked was divinely granted, notwithstanding my great unworthiness: for I knew in spirit that the adorable stigmatas were sensibly imprinted on my heart."

In chap. v.: "I had requested a person to repeat daily before the crucifix the following prayer for me: 'O most sweet Lord! I beseech Thee, through Thy pierced Heart, to transfix the heart of Gertrude with the darts of Thy love.' The following Sunday, as I was about to communicate, O my Divine Saviour! moved doubtless by the prayer which Thou hadst offered for me, Thou didst interiorly excite so vehement a desire, that I felt myself constrained to use these words: 'Lord, I beseech Thee of Thine infinite goodness to pierce my heart with the darts of Thy love,' and at the same moment I felt that my

* This second book was written by the Saint herself.

prayer had touched Thy Divine Heart; for I saw proceeding from the right hand of the crucifix, a ray of fire in the form of a pointed arrow, which stretched itself towards me, and then withdrew, as if to excite my desires. This continued till Wednesday, on which day, Mass being ended, behold suddenly and unexpectedly, Thou didst appear before me, and didst inflict a wound upon my heart."

In chap. xxiii.: "In the twenty-sixth year of my age . . . O Divine Light! Thou Who shinest in darkness, didst put an end to my puerile vanities. . . . Thou presentedest Thyself before me, and didst deign tenderly to win me to perfect reconciliation. Thou commencedst from that time to move me interiorly by ways, as admirable as they were secret, so that Thou mightest afterwards, as in Thine own dwelling, take Thy delight in my soul, *and in my heart*, as a friend with a friend, and a bridegroom with his bride. Thou didst then confer upon me that wonderful gift, which enabled me from that time till now to feel that Thou wert never absent from my heart, even for one moment; so that whenever I entered into myself I felt secure of Thy presence. And, in order that this heart might be to Thee an agreeable dwelling-place, Thou wast careful to prepare, and so magnificently adorn it, that all that I have read or heard of Solomon's Temple, or the palace of Assuerus, does not appear to me worthy to be compared to the beauty with which Thou enrichedst *this heart*. And then Thou willedst that I should commune with Thee as a queen

with her king. . . . Amongst Thy gifts to me, I value most these two: Thou didst engrave on my heart Thy Sacred Wounds, and didst inflict on my heart a wound of love, so deep and mighty, that if I had received no other consolation at Thy hands, these two graces alone would have sufficed to make me happy."

The pious reader will once more read with pleasure the transports of this lover of the Heart of Jesus towards His adorable Heart. In one of the admirable exercises which she wrote in the fervour of her devotion, and which seems to have been inspired by Divine love, the marks of love with which they abound being as numerous as the words they contain, the following may be read at length. We quote a few passages: "O Love! O my King! O my God! O Jesus, only object of my affection: receive me now, at once, under the amiable protection of Thy Sacred Heart, so that I may be wholly Thine. Draw me by the sweetness of Thy love and take possession of me . . . even at this very instant, take me, and plunge me in the boundless ocean of Thy immense charity. Without delay, plunge me into this fiery furnace of Thy love, and keep me there till the violence of the flames shall have consumed and reduced me to ashes, and then, sweetest Saviour, comfort me with Thy presence; there, make me learn the value of the Blood which has redeemed me; there, let me hear the sweet voice of Thy bounteous love, and call me to Thyself; there receive me into the embraces of

Thine infinite charity; there, in the sweetness of Thy Spirit, draw me into Thyself and submerge me in the abyss of Thy complete possession; there grant me the eternal enjoyment of Thy presence, for my soul desires Thee only, O Jesus! of all the attractions of the world the most sweet and dear to my heart."

Again: "O Love, Thou art the living water after which I thirst. Behold my heart, which yearns after Thee with an ardour which consumes it. Open to me the door of Thine amiable Heart. I here offer Thee mine. I will no longer have it in my own keeping; do Thou, O my treasure, possess it, keep it in Thine inner chamber." "Happy the soul, O God of love, which by an inseparable union with charity attaches itself to Thee! Happy the heart which is favoured by being united to Thy Heart, and which thus forms an indissoluble friendship with Thee." "O Jesus, my only hope, may Thy deified Heart, already pierced through love for me, and unceasingly open to sinners, be my refuge when my soul leaves the body, and there, in the infinite abyss of Thy love, may my sins be at once absorbed and effaced.

St. Catherine of Siena.

In the Life of this Saint, written by her confessor, Blessed Raymond de Capua, Book ii. chap. xvi., we read that: "One day, while the Saint was meditating on this verse of the Prophet, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God,'* she suddenly felt an extraordinary

* Psalm l. 12.

fervour and confidence, and she asked of God to take from her her own heart, which appeared stained with sin. She then beheld the Divine Spouse approaching her, and having reached her, He touched her on the left side, and at the same instant an opening appeared which reached even to the heart. The Saint felt absolutely that her heart was taken hold of by the hand of our Lord, and drawn from its place, after which He disappeared and left her without a heart. When Catherine afterwards gave an account of this vision to her confessor, he laughed at her: but she persisted in affirming the fact, and declared that our Lord had really taken away her heart. The confessor persisted in disbelieving it, saying that it was not possible to live without a heart; to which the Saint prudently replied that it was impossible for man, but not for God. She remained in this state for several days, till one day finding herself in St. Dominic's Church, after one of the ecstasies which were of common occurrence with her, on coming to herself she found herself surrounded with a celestial light, in the midst of which she perceived our Lord holding in His hand a new heart shining with light. At this vision the virgin fell trembling to the ground, and the Divine Spouse having drawn near her, opened for the second time her left side, and placed in it this new heart, saying: 'My dear daughter, I took away thy heart the other day, but behold, I now bestow on thee Mine in exchange, with which thou wilt live for the future;' and then having withdrawn His hand,

He closed the opening He had made, leaving only a scar all round the place, in proof of the miracle. This the Saint herself admitted, and it was seen by many people. It often happened that this new heart beat in so remarkable a manner, that it was heard by those around, who easily recognized that the throbbings were more than merely natural. During the transports caused by these impressions, the Saint often remarked to her confessor: 'Oh, Father, do you not perceive that a change has come over me? Oh, if you could but know and understand all that I feel in this new heart! Oh, that others besides you could understand it! There is no one who would not feel moved. All that I can say expresses nothing compared with what I feel in myself. I feel a raging fire and so intense an ardour in this heart of my Lord, that material flames are cold in comparison.'"

St. Teresa.

In her Life, written by one of her confessors (part i. chap. xiv.) we read: "The Lord so inflamed her heart with the fierce fire of Divine love that she felt as though she were on fire and dying." It appeared as though in the deepest depth of her soul there was, as it were, a flaming dart which struck it and was about to consume it. She experienced such fiery and ardent impressions of this love that she knew not what to do: it appeared to her as if her soul were about to separate from the body. She wandered here and there, like a

stricken deer, bearing about in her heart a burning arrow, the hurt and the wound of which burnt her. This Divine ardour increasing, the Saint had on various occasions the following vision: She beheld near her an angel in a material body, of ravishing beauty and so burning with fire that he appeared to belong to the order of the Seraphim. He held in his hand a golden dart, the point of which was on fire, with this dart he wounded her in the heart, and left her on fire with Divine love. She beheld this vision several times, for it was not on one occasion only that the angel pierced her heart, and on these days she was, as it were, lifted out of herself.

St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi.

In her Life (chap. vii.) we read: "The fire of the love of Jesus burned so vehemently in the heart of this virgin, that being no longer able to control or to conceal it, she was obliged to give way to it . . . being in the country with her mother, her heart was so filled with the abundance of Divine love, that she seemed to herself as though she was being burnt and consumed." In chap. xiv.: "Having one evening remained alone in the oratory after her prayers, her face became suddenly so flushed that one would have thought she had been seized with a violent fever; and she was obliged to uncover her chest to relieve the intensity of the feeling which consumed her." In chap. xix.: "To relieve the furnace of love

which she felt in her heart, she burst out into expressions of affection, and could not remain quiet." In chap. xxiv.: "St. Augustin appeared to her, and she, on fire with love, and burning with desire of having a continual remembrance of this ineffable grace (the Incarnation of the Word) begged the Saint to write upon her heart these words: *Verbum caro factum est.* . . . The ecstasy over, she declared she had received the favour which she had asked, and that the Saint had really written on her heart, *Verbum* in letters of gold; and in letters of blood the words, *caro factum est.*" In chap. xxxi.: "In recompense of the grief she felt at offences committed against God, it was made known to her that Jesus Christ intended to bestow His Heart upon her as He had upon St. Catherine of Siena. Her angel appeared with St. Catherine of Siena, at which she manifested great joy; she begged them to bear testimony to the gift which our Lord had made her of His Heart. She also invoked the Blessed Virgin that she might deign to assist her in receiving this precious gift worthily. At this instant she beheld Jesus her Divine Spouse approaching her to give her His Heart. At this sight, filled with a holy joy which lit up her countenance, she extended her arms, and raising herself, as though to go towards Him, she gave every appearance of having actually received His Divine Heart from Him. Her joy during this ecstasy was so intense that she appeared to be dissolving with love." In chap. lxxxvi.: "Besides the continual love

which, as it were, melted her heart, she was occasionally so inflamed with this Divine fire, that not being able to restrain it, it appeared in her countenance, in her actions, and in her words: so that the Saint, who was naturally pale, thin, and weak, when taken possession of by these flames of Divine love, seemed to become animated with new vigour. Her face became full and shining, her eyes shone like two stars; and to relieve the ardour which she could not conceal, she was obliged to keep constantly in motion." In chap. lxxxvii.: "It often happened that having been for some hours in this condition, and being unable longer to bear a fire so ardent, she went to the well, and there, even in midwinter, she raised her sleeves and plunged her arms into the water, and, taking a pitcher, drank a quantity of water and threw some over her chest, saying that she had the sensation of being burnt and consumed." In chap. xciii.: "God bestowed the additional grace upon her of being able to see Jesus Christ in the heart of her Sisters after Communion; and she related under what appearance she beheld Him in each Sister."

St. Rose of Lima.

We read as follows in the eleventh chapter of her Life: "This miraculous butterfly, of which we have already spoken, came one day and settled on the left side of the virgin, over her heart; and having lingered there for some time, it appeared to be

tracing something with its honey. Having finished, it disappeared: and in the spot where it had been was perceived the figure of a heart, drawn as perfectly as if by the hand of a painter. Rose alone understood the mystery; for she often heard the voice of the Divine Spouse Who asked her for her heart. And she understood the designs of God in this remarkable circumstance."

In chap. xiv.: "She felt her heart inflamed with celestial ardour, but the flames were so intense, and at the same time so sweet, that she could not explain it. . . . Rose replied in these terms to those who were deputed to examine into the spirit which influenced her: Since I am bound under obedience to make known things which I could have wished should be known to God alone, I am forced to admit that from the moment the darkness of desolation ceases, the eyes of my soul appear to open instantaneously to a wonderful light, which enlightens my spirit, and kindles in my heart an excessive love for my Divine Spouse."

In chap. xv.: "Every time that she came upon the name Jesus in the book she was reading, she paused to contemplate it . . . and in that moment she felt sensibly in her heart the presence of a burning love. And Jesus returned her love with love equally ardent, introducing Himself into her heart, and then bestowing on her the gift of understanding mysteries."

St. Catherine of Genoa.

In chap. ii. of her Life: "Directly she had placed herself on her knees, her heart was so violently wounded with love that she almost fell to the ground. This sweet wound deprived her of consciousness, and of the power of speech . . . she returned to her home wounded and on fire with so intense a love for God, that she was almost beside herself. The contrition she felt in her heart for the sins she had committed was so great, that if she had not been miraculously supported, she would have died, and her heart would have burst. . . . The fire which was kindled in her heart, and the violence of her grief drove her almost wild. She appeared bereft of reason, seeking for some relief from the intensity of the love and the grief with which her heart was filled. She was in this state for the space of three years, unceasingly consumed by love and grief. The darts of Divine love were so interior and so ardent that her heart was on fire. She was afterwards attracted to the breast of Jesus crucified, and then the Heart of Jesus was shown to her all on fire, and she knew that from this source proceeded the flames which had seized on her."

In chap. vii.: The furnace of love kindled in her heart was such that it burnt even the exterior of her body. She appeared to have a wound in the heart which made itself felt both in the front and at the back of the chest, in those parts which correspond with

the heart. The palpitations of her heart were so violent that it was thought she would have died if they had continued. When they had moderated, her heart remained melted in a state of Divine and admirable sweetness. In conclusion, all that we have stated here is confirmed by the Saint in the admirable dialogue written by herself, in which she relates part of that which befell her after her conversion.

The Blessed Angela de Foligni.

The reader must bear in mind, while reading all these testimonies, that the object we have in view is to prove the extraordinary workings of grace, which take place principally in the heart.

In the Life of this admirable servant of God, we read as follows (in the Sixteenth Step of Perfection): "As I was repeating the *Pater Noster*, God made known the prayer in my heart with so clear a knowledge of the Divine goodness and my own unworthiness that I am unable to express it. It was in my *heart* that each word was explained; and I repeated the prayer with great contrition and compunction."

In Step Seventeen: "A sweet consolation began to make itself felt in my heart; but not without a mixture of bitterness, and my *heart* was unsatisfied."

In Step Eighteen: "The fire of love with which my *heart* was consumed, was so fierce that I never wearied of remaining on my knees and doing penance; but this fire grew still more fierce later on."

In her writing on the Passion, fourth consolation: "I felt so intense a sorrow that I almost died; and my heart seemed ready to burst."

In her writing on the Blessed Sacrament, chap. xxxviii. Second reason and consolation: "My eyes beheld with certainty our Lord Jesus Christ in this Sacrament, as I desired to see Him, suffering, bleeding, and crucified; and my grief was so great, that it seemed to me my *heart* would give way."

Idem, chap. xl. Fourth consolation and vision, at the conclusion: "When making the Sign of the Cross and putting my hand on my forehead at the words 'In the name of the Father,' I feel nothing out of the common; but when I put my hand near the *heart* on saying 'And of the Son,' I feel an extraordinary sensation of love and of consolation, because I seem to find Him there."

St. Margaret of Cortona.

In Book i. chap. xx. of her Life: "On another occasion our Lord appeared to her as the Crucified, and opening the wound in His side, He showed her in this depth of love, His own Heart, on which her name was engraved. At this touching sight the heart of Margaret, moved to desire a new union with the Heart of Jesus, which manifested itself to her, strove almost to break away from her that this union might become more intimate. This being impossible, it endeavoured to unite itself to the Sacred Heart by the most ardent love. . . . At this moment it seemed as

though her soul abandoned the body, and having entered the wound opened by our Lord, only lived in the Heart of this amiable Saviour.

Book ii. chap. ii. p. 182: "After Holy Communion she felt her heart so inflamed with Divine love . . . that apostrophizing St. Paul in her transport, 'O blessed Apostle,' she exclaimed, 'I, like you, shall cry, Who shall separate me from the love of Jesus Christ? neither hunger nor thirst, . . . the more so that it hath pleased Thee, O my God, to light up in my heart such ardour of love, that to yield to its impulses I can brave everything.'" Book ii. chap. xx. p. 350: "A flaming brand having fallen on her flesh, she did not feel it, being at that moment inflamed with a still more ardent fire, which burnt her heart." Book iii. chap. viii. p. 432: "The heart of this favoured penitent seemed to melt through the ardour of this great love."

St. Clare de Montefalco.

In chap. v. of her Life: "While in prayer, she was, as it were, anticipated with such abundant sweetness, that through excess of Divine love she fell into a state of unconsciousness, not being able to endure the ardour of the flames which consumed her. In the year of our Lord 1294, she was favoured with a wonderful vision, which is looked upon as the most remarkable of her life, on account of its prodigious effect upon her heart. Our Lord, wishing to favour His beloved spouse with an intimate union with Himself, and to

satisfy the ardent desire she had continually to be transformed into Jesus Christ crucified, and that her heart, like soft wax receiving the impression of the seal, should receive that of our Lord's Cross. One day, when she was absorbed in meditation upon the Passion of Jesus Christ, she beheld this Divine Saviour, laden with a heavy cross upon His shoulders, coming towards her, and addressing her in these words: 'Clare, my beloved spouse, I have sought within Thy heart a spot in which to plant my Cross; if, therefore, it be thy wish to become really and truly my daughter and my spouse, thou must be fastened to My Cross, and die on it.' The virgin, filled with joy unspeakable, exclaimed, 'Behold Thy handmaid, O my Jesus! be it done unto me according to Thy word. O Sacred Cross! be thou inseparably united to my heart.' The vision disappeared, and the image of the Crucified and of all the mysteries of the Passion remained imprinted on the heart of the Blessed Clare." Chapters xxix. xxx. and xxxi. contain a detailed account of all that happened after the death of the Saint, when, her heart having been opened, the implements of the Passion were found distinctly engraven on it; and this was officially admitted.

Observation.—Those who are opposed to extraordinary graces frequently object that in these matters the testimony of women alone is brought forward, rarely that of men, insinuating thereby that it ought to be mistrusted. It is easy to answer this objection.

First, women who are really holy are as much under the influence of the Spirit of God as men; and for this reason alone their testimony is of equal value. Secondly, it is true, as St. Teresa remarks, that the Holy Spirit generally selects the weaker sex for these supernatural graces. His wisdom understands wherefore, but it is on this account that the testimony of woman is much more frequent. Thirdly, we must take notice that women who have been highly favoured by God, being absolutely under the control of their superiors and directors, were for the most part obliged under obedience to commit to writing all that passed in their inner life, in order that it might be subjected to close examination, God, always admirable in His dealings, having thus ordained, in order that the marvels of His love and grace towards souls might be known, and the memory of them preserved in the Church. Men, on the contrary, were for the most part exempt from this subjection, and kept secret the graces they received, neither committing them to writing, nor confiding them to others. If then we bring forward the testimony of women, it is because their testimony is in existence, and can be found in their writings, and if we do not produce that of men, it is not because they did not receive similar graces, but that they never committed them to writing, nor left an account behind them at their death. In order, however, that we may give convincing proof that the hearts of the saints, *men* as well as women, received alike supernatural impressions, we shall relate some

examples taken from their lives, and we shall then return again to the testimony of holy women, because the simple and detailed accounts which they give themselves of these experiences are incomparably more calculated to persuade and instruct than can be the words of an historian who relates in his own fashion the acts of the saints.

St. Philip Neri.

We read in the Life of this Saint, written by Peter James Bacci, and based on the process of his canonization, as follows (book i. chap. vi.): "Philip frequently felt himself filled with such abundant consolations, and such ardent love, that being unable to bear the fire which seemed to devour him, he could not refrain from uttering loud cries, and being overcome by the vehemence of what he felt in his heart, he would throw himself exhausted on the ground. One day, when asking the Holy Spirit to bestow His gifts upon him, he felt suddenly kindled within him so vehement a love, that, his strength failing, he fell to the ground, and in the endeavour to restrain the violence of the flame which was consuming him, he opened his habit to cool his breast. He remained for some time in this state, when, finding himself somewhat relieved, he rose up with an extraordinary sensation of intense joy. At the same moment he was seized with the most violent trembling, and putting his hand to his breast, he found close to the heart a swelling of the size of one's closed hand.

The cause of this swelling was discovered after his death, for, on opening his body, two ribs were found out of their places, raised and broken in such a manner, that one side of the rib was separated and removed to some distance from the other, so that the two portions never reunited during the fifty years that the Saint survived. From this time dated the palpitations of the heart from which the Saint suffered during the remainder of his life, and which only happened on occasions when he was engaged in spiritual duties such as prayer, or at Mass, &c., and which caused such violent agitation, that it seemed as if his heart would be torn from his body.

"It happened occasionally that some of his intimate friends, on laying their heads on his breast, felt so great an agitation of the heart, that it seemed as though their heads were pushed aside, and the Saint himself on these occasions felt a heat so intense in the neighbourhood of the heart, that it seemed to spread all over the body, and obliged him, old as he was, even in winter and at night, to open the windows of his room, and to try to moderate by other methods the ardour which consumed him. It was usual with him on this account to keep his habit open, even in winter; and when he was cautioned on the subject, he replied that he could not do otherwise, in consequence of the fire he felt within himself, and he used during these paroxysms to exclaim, "I am wounded by the darts of love."

St. Peter of Alcantara.

In his Life, written by Francis Marchese, and based upon the process of his canonization, we read (book iv. chap. ii.): "The least thing he heard or saw of his well Beloved was the cause of his being inflamed with love in such a way that he was deprived of all power of moderating its intensity. He gave evident proof of it in the ardent sighs that burst out from his *heart*. . . . He sometimes burned with so fierce a flame of love, that his *heart* being unable to endure its violence, he was forced to leave his cell, in order to breathe more freely in some open place, or in the midst of the fields. . . . The warmth arising from the fire with which his *heart* was inflamed, spread throughout his whole body. . . . It happened one day in the depth of winter that, being more than usually inflamed with this Divine fire, which diffused itself through all his flesh, he was no longer able to endure its heat, and running hurriedly to the garden, he plunged into a half-frozen pond, and remained there long enough to destroy the ordinary vital heat in any one else, but by an astounding prodigy the flame that consumed him was so ardent as to melt the ice around him."

The Blessed Henry de Suzo of the Order of St. Dominic.

From his Life, chap. vii.: "At this time there was an exceedingly great increase in the Divine fire with which his *heart* burned. One day, when he felt its

heat more warmly than ever, he withdrew into his oratory to breathe it out in sighs, and in a transport of fervour, taking a point of iron, he turned to his God, and exclaimed, 'Give me, O Lord, strength to accomplish my desire, in order that my *heart* may melt with Thy love.' Saying these words he began to engrave with the iron point upon his breast near his *heart*, the Name of Jesus, and having formed all the letters, he left his cell, bearing these precious wounds, and going to a crucifix that stood not far from it, he prostrated himself before it, and said, 'O Jesus, the only love of my heart, in Thy goodness look favourably on my desires. I have written Thee upon my flesh in letters of blood, but I am not satisfied. Would that I could penetrate even to the veins of my heart, but I cannot. Oh, hear my prayer, and supply what I cannot do. Do Thou Thyself, since Thou canst, imprint Thy Holy Name in the depths of my heart, and engrave it there so deeply that it can never be effaced.' The favour he desired was granted to him, and the Holy Name of Jesus was really imprinted in his *heart*."

The Blessed Henry wrote certain Contemplations on the Passion of Jesus Christ, which are full of Divine unction, and are to be found at the end of his Life. In these he speaks in various places of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. We shall here quote some passages, in order that the reader may be better able to judge of the feelings and the language with which the Holy Spirit inspires pure souls towards these

Sacred Hearts: "O my Crucified Love! do not forget the charity of your most amiable Heart. . . . May your sorrows, O most merciful Lord, be the healing of mine, and may your *Heart*, all burning with love, wound, strike, and inflame my soul. . . . Oh, never forget, most sweet Jesus, the unmeasured sorrow of your *Heart* when you saw your afflicted Mother at the foot of the Cross! . . . O my Jesus, imprint your cruel Death in the very depths of my heart, that I may ever be mindful of it. . . . Ah, transform my poor and wretched heart into your Divine *Heart*. . . . May your sorrows unite your Sacred Heart to mine, and make it ever amiable and propitious to me. May the holy and loving gladness with which you have restored me to freedom, sweetly compel my heart to live in a continual union with your amiable *Heart*, the source of life and holiness. . . . O most blessed Mary, tell me with how many wounds your *Heart* was then pierced. . . . O most glorious Virgin, I compassionate you in your sorrows as I contemplate your sweet and amiable Heart plunged in this torrent of woe. . . . O Mother of mercy, grant that the cruel wounds of your *Heart* may obtain for me true contrition for my sins. . . . May your desolate *Heart* teach me to despise, to hate, and to fly from all love for earthly things. . . . Remember, O Mother of God, the unspeakable sorrow with which your *Heart* was overwhelmed when the dead Body of your Son was taken from your embrace."

The Venerable Mother Clara Maria of the Passion (Vittoria Colonna, daughter of the Grand Constable Colonna), Carmelitess, and Foundress of the Convent of Regina Cœli at Rome.

In her Life (book i. chap. iii.), giving an account of herself to her director, she speaks thus: "After Communion I saw for an instant, but very distinctly, my heart, which appeared to me open and of great size, and I seemed to see within it Jesus Christ, full of majesty and ravishing beauty. . . . His face especially was an abyss of light, which made all my heart resplendent."

Book ii. chap. xiv.: "I perceived that our Lord Jesus Christ was in the midst of my heart. It seemed to me that He made it His dwelling-place, as being its sole Master."

Book i. chap. x.: "In a transport of her soul our Lord made Himself visible to her in her own heart with more brightness and glory than on the first occasion, and she attests that the Divine Love infused into her heart made an impression on her at once so sweet and so violent, that she felt as if she were dying."

Book ii. chap. xiv.: "Although Jesus Christ appeared all covered with wounds, His sacred Flesh was resplendent with great majesty. He gave me to understand that He wished to take His repose in my miserable heart, and this ravished my heart with joy. . . I perceived that a God, by His power, was

drawing my heart to Himself, and I cannot express the peace and the sweetness I felt at that moment, seeing that the Divine Word, Who is in the bosom of the Father, deigned to draw my heart to Himself. There was then no need of my making any particular act in order to offer Him my heart, for my Divine Master was taking it as something that was His own, and already belonged to Him."

Chap. xviii. "I enjoy an ineffable favour given me by God, namely, that I possess Him in the depths of my soul and in my heart."

Book iii. chap. iii. : "I sometimes feel love for God arise suddenly in me so as to cause me outwardly agitation and trembling. At other times it seems to me that my heart dilates and grows larger. . . . These last few days I have felt myself drawn to this state, which I continually feel, more deeply. I have felt God very distinctly present in my heart, and I heard these words, "Heart to Heart." God and my soul were conversing together, and mutually loving one another. God, holding my heart beneath His gaze, knew that I loved Him . . . and in this reciprocal love I had a very lively feeling that my heart was loved by God."

Book iv. chap. iv. : "Entering into deeper recollection, I saw our Lord Jesus Christ with a very sweet look stretching out His Divine hand, taking my heart, and drawing it to Himself."

Chap. v. : "Being in prayer and deeply recollected, I had this vision: Our Lord appeared to me on the

Cross; the nails which pierced His feet and hands were so driven in, that they came out beyond the Cross, and it appeared to me that my heart was stretched upon the Cross in such a way that the points which pierced the hands and feet of Jesus also pierced my heart."

The Venerable Sister Maria Vittoria Angelica, a Roman Nun of the Third Order of Servites.

The Life of this servant of God, printed at Rome in 1670, is full of wonders, of which the following relate to our subject:

Part i. p. 114: "On Ascension Day, after Communion, she was suddenly seized with a palpitation of the heart so violent, that the cross she wore on her breast was broken by it, and her heart was filled with an ineffable sweetness, which threw her into an ecstasy."

Part ii. p. 109: "She complained to Jesus Christ that her heart was still subject to earthly affections. . . . One day, in an ecstasy, Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin appeared to her. . . . Jesus Christ asked her if she was willing to make Him a present of her heart. 'Ah, Lord,' she replied, 'would that I could draw it out of my breast to give it to you.' 'Would you wish me to take it Myself?" said our Lord. 'Ah, Lord, it is yours; take it as a thing that belongs to you.' Jesus Christ approached her, and opening her side, took out her heart, leaving her with such a sense of weakness, that she felt as if

she must die. Four days after, in an ecstasy, our Lord appeared to her again, and said to her, 'I have taken your heart. I am going to restore it to you, but you must know that it is a new heart, so pure and so full of love, that it is enough to say that it is formed by the hand of a God.'"

P. 243: "The Queen of Heaven appearing to her said: 'Console yourself, my daughter, and put an end to your tears, and in such occurrences do not abandon yourself to grief. Look at my Heart, and reflect that you are inscribed there. This should be enough to support you in your weakness.'"

P. 278: "The Blessed Virgin appeared to her once more on Easter Sunday, her face all shining with light, and manifested the same affection to her, again showing her her Heart, in which she was inscribed with other devoted servants of Mary."

The Venerable Mother Catherine Paluzzi, Foundress of the Dominicanesses of Morlupo.

In her Life, printed at Rome in 1667, book ii. chap. xvi., we read: "Sister Catherine knew that without extraordinary purity it is impossible to converse familiarly with God, and she conceived a very great desire for this virtue. . . . One day, when she was praying for it with more than ordinary fervour, Jesus appeared to her. Her Divine Lover brought with Him a heart conformed in all things to His good pleasure, and worthy to be the temple of such great Majesty as His. Approaching His servant, He

took her own heart from her, and having put in its place the one He brought, He disappeared, leaving Catherine in an abyss of delight. Amongst the most sublime effects produced in her by this new heart, were certain outbursts of love, which the servant of God thus describes: 'It has happened to me many times, as well in prayer as out of it, that I have experienced certain sudden and strong feelings of love, which, like so many burning arrows, pierced my heart, and transported me out of myself. They left me all on fire, and so inebriated by the desire of uniting myself to God, that I felt as if fainting."

Book iv. p. 367: "Her body was opened after her death, and it was ordered that her heart should be placed by itself in a casket. . . . At the first incision of the knife the blood burst out, but the wonder of the bystanders was immensely increased when, on examining the heart, it was found pierced with two wounds, one larger than the other, as if it had been pierced through and through with a lance."

Book v. chap. iii. p. 405:—The servant of God herself speaks thus: "On the eve of St. Bartholomew, I went to church, as it were, transported out of myself. At the end of Mass I was going up to receive Holy Communion, when, all of a sudden, I saw the Blessed Sacrament come to me, and place Itself on my heart. There, it seemed to me, we conversed together with mutual love, yet without uttering a

word. The love which united me to Him was so strong, that it took from me the power of speech. There is no tongue in the world which could explain such a state."

The Venerable Mother Ursula Benincasa, Foundress of the Theatines of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, known as "of the Congregation."

In her Life, part i. chap. viii. p. 63: "In order to make her capable of so many graces and favours our Lord gave her a heart like that which He had formerly given to St. Catherine of Siena. . . . After the death of this servant of God, when her body was opened, the doctors found her heart all burned and almost consumed."

Part ii. chap. i. p. 266: "She was inflamed with this holy love so that every moment her heart dilated more and more, and as if it could not remain pent up in her breast, it beat in an extraordinary way, causing a violent and very rapid agitation of her heart. . . . At the time when she began to be favoured with ecstasies this palpitation of the heart partly ceased, as she stated to her confessor; but the fire that had been kindled in her breast, and that burned and consumed her heart, increased to such a degree that even in winter in order to moderate its heat a quantity of cold water had to be poured over her."

The Venerable Mother Mary of the Incarnation, an Ursuline, and Foundress of the Ursulines of Canada.

Those who read her Life, which she herself wrote by order of her Superiors, will readily agree that nothing more wonderful in the way of spirituality and holiness is to be found elsewhere in the Lives of the Saints. The following are some passages bearing upon our subject:

Book i. chap. iv.: "When I heard the word of God it seemed to me that my heart was like a vase, into which that Divine word flowed like a liquid. This was not mere imagination, but was really an effect of the Spirit of God. On one occasion when a preacher in a sermon on the Name of Jesus had several times pronounced the Holy Name, the word, like some Heavenly manna, filled my heart so fully, that all the day every breath seemed to say only: 'Jesus! Jesus!'"

Chap. vii.: "At that moment my heart felt transported in itself, and all changed into the love of Him Who had granted it this singular mercy, and this made it suffer, while experiencing this same love, the greatest sorrow for having offended Him that one can possibly imagine—no, no one can imagine it. This dart of love was so penetrating, that in order to satisfy it I would have cast myself into a fire. I began to repeat all the sins that had been shown to me, with an outburst of tears, which came from the sorrow that I had in my heart."

Chap. viii.: "My heart spoke to God so familiarly and so eloquently, that to me it was something incomprehensible. The words spoken by my heart were acts of thanksgiving, praise, loving sorrow, promises of fidelity to Him, and desires to hide myself in the Wounds of Jesus Christ, for He it was Who had driven into my heart a dart of love by which I was consumed with affectionate gratitude."

Chap. x.: "As soon as I knelt before my crucifix, my Divine Saviour carried away all my thoughts, and all I could do was to say to Him: 'It is love that has reduced you to this state; if you were not love, you would not have suffered in this way.' After that my heart could only quietly endure the feelings excited by His love. On such occasions I have experienced a beating of my heart so strange, that it reduced me to a state of powerlessness. If it had broken I should have found relief in my death."

Chap. xxiv.: "My soul in its transports spoke to God with great familiarity; there were loving complaints and ineffable sighings; if I could have cried out aloud it would have been a relief; for on such occasions it seems as if the heart is extraordinarily dilated, and that it bears within it a fire that would rise up to a great height if it could but break out. This fire is composed of ardent affections that cannot be described. Once I felt that my heart had been seized and inclosed in another heart, and that though there were two hearts, they were so closely united that they were as one, and an interior voice said to

me distinctly: *It is thus that hearts are united.* I was many days united to our Lord, Who kept possession of my heart in so sweet a way that but for some extraordinary support I should have fainted every moment, this enjoyment of God penetrating me with such sweetness that my body could not have otherwise endured it."

Chap. xxiv. in the Appendix: "After this favour I again felt myself still more inflamed in my interior: I felt that I was filled with vehement love. This lasted two or three days, during which it seemed that my heart must burst asunder. This time having elapsed, it was as if one opened the flues of a furnace to allow the flame to rise; for my heart broke out into such ardent words that it seemed as if they were so many flames which darted forth as though with a vengeful love towards Him Who had made me suffer. . . . It seemed as if there could not fail to be an opening in my breast. . . . One would not believe it, but I do not say a thousandth part of what passed."

Chap. xxvii.: "After this suffering my soul was in a moment freed from that fulness which the Eternal Word had poured into it, and which was nothing else but this fire and flame which had been kept close in my heart without being able to issue forth from it. Then with another kind of suffering it sent them back to Him like so many arrows, and cried out: 'O Love, you have been pleased to make a martyr of me, I must have my revenge by inflicting on you the same

wounds as those that you have made me suffer.' Then it seemed as if lightning rushed out of my heart and darted into that of its well Beloved."

From the Appendix: "My sweet Love! my adorable delight! Do you take pleasure in my languishing love? Do you not know that mine is a real desire? Yes, you know it, for my heart is laid open in your presence, close to the *altar of your Sacred Heart.* May I then be all yours, as you are all mine? Sacred altar, may the sacrifice be accomplished upon you, O adorable furnace, burn all that which desires only to live amid your flames. Could I possibly see myself so near you and be laid upon this fiery altar without being all consumed with love? O my sweet Love, I am united to you and to your Heart burning with love: I live and die at the same time. I live, because one cannot be united to you without living by your life, O admirable Life! and I die, because this union is also a death which puts an end to all that is not you. Thus living and dying I do not belong to myself, but to you, O my dearest all! my Love! the only desire of my soul.

"I have suffered extreme pain at not being able to love enough; for it is a pain which inflicts a martyrdom on the heart. Our Lord gave me so powerful an attraction to this, that it seemed to me that I held my heart in my hands, making a sacrifice of it to Him. All of a sudden I was so strongly transported with love that with suffering and by the effect of this inward fire, I was quite beside myself,

and it seemed to me that my most chaste Spouse took pleasure in adding new fires to the ardent love which was consuming me.

"What is it, O my Love? Your pure and Divine eyes are like flames of fire, and it is with these that you make so many wounds in the hearts of those you have subjected to you. O my adorable Spouse! never heal these wounds, but rather increase this happy martyrdom. O my dear Love! how delightful are the feelings you inspire! Oh, who could ever watch what passes when one feels your burning love. Either he would burn with the same flame or his heart would be full of demons. O my most adorable Love, one must see your Heart to understand the sweet union of your love!"

Chap. xxviii. in the Appendix: "I felt my heart ever suffering under some new access of ardour, and unable to remain silent it breathed forth its fire in its complaints; only for these, I believe it would have broken in pieces. I felt blows upon my heart, as if it were being pierced. This is not mere imagination, for I really suffered it, and it caused me an extreme, but at the same time a most delightful sense of pain. There came too great palpitations of the heart which caused me much suffering from my anxiety that others should not perceive them. But our Lord aided me, and I was able to withdraw before this fire broke into outward signs. But once in the oratory it came upon me so violently, that it deprived me of all strength. It is an agonizing martyrdom. It seems

as though my heart were the mark at which the Beloved unceasingly discharges His shafts, and that He desires not to spare it, but to pierce it in every part. By these wounds He makes it give out the fire of which it is full. Without this aid and relief, it would be rent asunder by the impetuosity of the love that it contains. My heart is thus destined for continual suffering, but of a kind more to be loved than anything else under Heaven."

In the notes of her second retreat, which she wrote under obedience, in the first meditation of the fifth day, she says these words: "I am astonished that my heart is able to endure this excessive strain, for it is the part that suffers most, and it seems that all my love is inclosed in it."

The Venerable Mother Anne Marguerite Clément, of the Order of the Visitation.

The Order of the Visitation, so fertile in holiness and so dear to the Heart of Jesus, has never produced any one holier and more pleasing to that Divine Heart, or who has had a larger share in its favours than the Venerable Mother Clément. She was one of the first of the nuns trained by St. Francis de Sales, and one of those whom God had chosen to spread through France the good odour of the rising Order by the various houses which they founded. She was first sent by the holy Founder to the foundation at Orleans, and she was afterwards Superior of those at Montargis and Melun. Her life was full of

the most heroic virtue and rarest wonders of grace. Her interior state was examined and approved by Mgr. Octave de Bellegarde, Archbishop of Sens, who always spoke of her as a saint. It is well known that the great piety of this illustrious prelate made him quite competent to judge by himself of interior things. The Ven. Mother de Chantal in her letters bears the highest testimony to the virtues of Mother Clément. She used to speak of her as another St. Catherine of Siena or of Genoa. Her director, Father Gallice, a Barnabite, whose merits raised him to the office of General of his Order, and whose virtues made him specially beloved by Pope Alexander VII., did not hesitate to write after Mother Clément's death, that he had never known a soul equal to hers in holiness, and that he did not suppose he would ever meet with one that would surpass her. One may see in his letters to the Ven. Mother de Chantal how deeply impressed he was with admiration for what occurred in this holy soul. The operations of God in her were moreover approved by Father de Coudren at Suffren, who had been consulted with reference to them, and whose learning and talent in such spiritual matters were acknowledged by every one. The extraordinary favours received by Mother Clément appeared to Father Galice, who had a special knowledge of them, so well calculated to give glory to God if a record of them were preserved, that acting in concert with the Ven. Mother de Chantal, he obliged her by an express order to put them in writing. These Memoirs which she wrote under

obedience, and some writings left by Father Galice himself, formed the materials of the Life of the Venerable Mother Clément, from which we have taken the following passages relating to our subject. We beg that the reader will pardon the length of our extract. It seems to us one of the best fitted for the purpose we have in view, for in this one Life we find wherewith to establish all other points we have noted at the beginning of this article. Here are the details :

"One night, waking as if with a bound, she found herself suddenly filled, in an extraordinary way, with the feeling of God's presence. Jesus Christ appeared to her as if seated in the midst of her heart, wishing thereby to indicate to her that He had just taken possession of her. He said these words, 'Thy heart is Mine, and I belong to it.'

"After a general confession her heart was touched with such strong and lively contrition that it seemed to her to be ready to break with sorrow. . . . During the night which preceded the happy day of her Communion, 'I could only sleep,' she said, 'for two hours, for the darts of Divine love had so deeply wounded me, that I thought I should die of it.'

"On January 1st, 1630, while occupied in her morning prayer, in honouring, in common with the whole Church, the Holy Name of Jesus, she received the signal favour that Jesus Christ Himself with His Divine finger engraved His adorable Name around her heart, and explained to her the wonderful meanings that were contained in the letters of that august

Name. He assured her that this Holy Name would be like a seal upon her heart, to make it His possession, and to close the entrance of it against all others but Him. . . . The love of Jesus Christ for His spouse did not end there; after He had surrounded her heart with the letters of the Name of Jesus, wishing to give the finishing touch to this work of grace, He said to her, 'I apply My Heart to thine;" and the deed following the word, she immediately felt her own heart uniting itself to the Heart of her Divine Spouse in a way that cannot be explained.

"On another occasion Jesus Christ gave her to understand that it was His intention to make her heart as it were a victim, which was to be in a state of perpetual homage, adoring His. In order to correspond in a more worthy manner to His desire, she wished to have the hearts of all creatures throughout the universe, in order by their means to render her homage more befitting the greatness of God; but all this being still too little, she turned to the Heart of Jesus, the only Heart capable of paying to God homage worthy of Him, and she begged that this Divine Heart would itself supply for all that was wanting in the duty she owed to His Father.

"Once on the feast of St. John the Baptist, when in prayer she was considering the virtue of this holy Precursor, our Lord suggested to her these words of the Psalmist, 'Hearken, my daughter, and see and incline thy ear,'* giving her to understand that He

* Psalm xliv. 11.

wished for the consent of her soul in order to act upon it according to His good pleasure. . . . Then in order to dispose her for the favour He was preparing for her, He darted into her heart the arrows of His holy love which wounded it so acutely that she cried out, 'O Love, how piercing are your darts, and how deep the wounds they make!' She then relates how Jesus Christ changed hearts with her. These are her words: 'The immense goodness of my God does not weary of pouring out in fresh profusion His love upon my soul, and thus it has pleased Him, by some means that I cannot understand, far less explain, to draw my heart out of my breast and place His own there; so that it now seems to me that my heart is no other than the Heart of Jesus itself; then he took mine, and placed it so deep in His adorable breast that it was lost to my sight. Oh, what holiness and perfection does not the Heart of Jesus contain in itself! It is an abyss of love.'

"Another time, pondering deeply all that Jesus was to her heart, she saw her Divine Saviour holding her heart between His hands, and after having gazed upon it attentively, He said to her: 'Just as precious stones are surrounded with gold to make them more brilliant, so your heart must be surrounded with the purest gold;' and she understood that this gold was the very bosom of the Father, in which He wished to place her heart, and where, in fact, it seemed to her that He placed it.

"One day in Lent, when she was assisting at the

Litanies of the Passion, no sooner was the invocation, *Jesu Christe*, pronounced, than she felt that Jesus Christ was imprinting His Holy Name upon her heart, as if by applying a red-hot seal to it; this feeling was so lively and penetrating, that it seemed to her as if her heart would be consumed by it.

"On another occasion when she was meditating on the charge made by the Jews against our Lord, that He made Himself the Christ, the Son of God their King, it seemed to her that Jesus Christ seized upon her heart, saying to her, 'Here is My kingdom of peace, where I exercise My power with the fullest authority, without meeting with any resistance.' . . . At the same time he dilated her heart as if to make it more fit to be His dwelling-place. In fact, she felt that her heart enlarged itself, and that the presence of God filled every part of it. Finally, Jesus Christ imprinted upon her heart these three names—Christ, God, King. . . . He showed her His Wounds as so many open gates by which He invited her to enter and penetrate even to His Heart."

Father Galice, giving an account of the state of his penitent to the Ven. Mother de Chantal, relates at length in his second letter, dated September 15, 1630, a favour of which the following are the details: "On the night between the 21st and 22nd of October, when retiring to rest, as she was making the sign of the Cross . . her heart was suddenly seized with a sense of the presence of Jesus Christ, which inflamed her with His love. She had a presentiment of some

new favour from her Spouse, and exclaimed: 'Ah, Lord! what do you desire of me? What do you wish to do?' 'I wish to practise you,' said Jesus Christ, 'in a new kind of conflict. It is against Me you must fight, and with My own weapons, for love will begin the combat, love will carry it on, and love will end it in your heart. I mean to make it die of love.' At the same time He shot into her heart three arrows all burning with the fire of His love, and she felt herself wounded so deeply that she thought she would lose her life. Jesus Christ, however, took pleasure in her pain and at seeing her languish with it, then showing her His Divine Heart He said: 'Here is the mark at which you must shoot your arrows in your turn; these arrows are nothing more than the movements of your heart; love Me and you will wound My Heart. At these words in a transport of love she shot a thousand burning shafts, which seemed to her to have made in the Heart of Jesus an opening large enough for her to enter and hide herself in that adorable Heart, where indeed Jesus Christ received her and united her to Himself."

Another time while she was thanking God and recommending herself to Him, calling Him her Master, her Father, her Ruler, Jesus Christ seizing upon her heart said to her: "Yes I am all this, and I wish to rule all your being." "He then placed Himself in my heart," she says, "and told me that it was His throne." In the same place she relates another operation of grace, during which she felt her

heart beating and palpitating in the presence of God as if it would burst out of her breast.

In a letter in which she gives Mother de Chantal an account of her interior state we find these words: "The love of God produced such powerful effects upon me, that I could hardly endure them: my heart seemed ready to come out of me, so forcibly did it feel itself drawn. . . . When I cast my eyes upon the Word, He has such an attraction for my heart, that it always receives a new wound from this look; my accustomed dwelling-place is in the wound of the Heart of my Saviour, it seems to me that He keeps me shut up therein, and that He is ever making our union a closer one."

In another letter she speaks thus: "To your charity I must tell all. Jesus in His goodness seems only to wish for my heart, which He has created for Himself alone, in order that it may dwell nowhere but in the bosom of the Father, or in His own Heart. It is thither that He is always drawing it by His love. He acts in the same way towards me, choosing my weak heart for His abode."

"One night when she was reciting the Miserere, as she came to the verse, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God,' the Heavenly Father presented her to His Spirit, and told Him that He wished to create in her a heart entirely new, and in which He would permit no impediment to His abode therein, for He wished to dwell there always. It seemed to her that the Three Divine Persons entered into her

heart, and that after having purified it, They filled it with fresh charity . . . and having thus enriched it, They said to her, 'See how rich your heart is. This is because it is our dwelling-place.'"

"One day when she was going up to Holy Communion and was with great earnestness conjuring our Lord to give her humility and meekness, the favour of her close union with Jesus Christ was again given to her, and as the adorable Heart of the Divine Saviour was the noble means of which He made use to perform His grandest operations in her soul, He united the heart of His spouse to His own, making use of His own Heart as of a seal to imprint humility on that of His spouse. Then she felt herself moved to ask for meekness from the Heart of Jesus, and she did so with this prayer: 'O Heart of Jesus, source of meekness, unite my heart to yourself that it may be changed into you only.' That moment she felt that Jesus Christ was renewing the exchange of His Heart for hers, saying to her as He did so: 'You cannot have meekness without My Heart, which is its true source.'"

In chap. xxvi. she relates another very remarkable favour: "One day," she says, "when I was thinking of the favour which St. Francis of Assisi and St. Catherine of Siena received in being marked with the holy stigmata, it pleased the goodness of God to draw to Himself all the powers of my soul in deep recollection, and to bestow His light upon me which, while it illuminated my mind, at the same

time inflamed my heart with so intense and so burning a love, that I thought it would consume me. At the same instant, I felt in the depth of my heart a pain as violent as if it had been pierced in five places, and immediately I heard the voice of Jesus Christ saying to me: 'I wish to imprint upon your heart five kinds of love instead of the stigmata with which I marked my beloved, in order that this may be to you a reminder that will continually bring to your mind the memory of My Passion and Death.' He then, by explaining to me these five kinds of love, gave me to understand the nature of the five wounds I had received. Since that time I never turn to the Passion of Jesus Christ without feeling that this fivefold love is being renewed in me by its wounds being made deeper. . . . All the Wounds of the Sacred Humanity are so many mouths which cry out to us: 'O dear souls! love the love of God; suffer for it, and die of love for Him Whom love itself has made to die.'"

One day when she was on the point of communicating, and was thinking of the favour that Veronica received when Jesus Christ imprinted the features of His face upon the towel with which she had wiped it, she heard Him say to her interiorly: 'Give me thy heart, and I will do thee the same favour.' She presented it to Him, and Jesus Christ imprinted on her heart His Divine face all covered with blood and wounds, just as one imprints a seal on soft wax (this is her expression); she was thereby so pene-

trated with sorrowed love, that the feeling of this impression remained with her for the rest of her life. On another occasion, Jesus Christ showed her His Heart as a fountain of living water, to which He invited her to come and quench her thirst.

Conclusion.

From the testimony we have adduced, these four truths follow:

I. That these holy souls speak of the heart in a real and physical sense: this is evident from the clear and precise expressions of which they so frequently make use.

II. That the heart is the seat and principle of the feelings they experience, and of which they give an account: they are unanimous in their statements on this point.

III. That the supernatural operations which they undergo take effect in the heart, and there produce wonderful impressions of which we have just seen the account from their own writings.

IV. That Jesus Christ often makes use of His own Heart to confer extraordinary favours on these pure souls, and inspires them with admirable feelings towards His Divine Heart.

This is established, I say, by the force of evidence, for we have just had it. If, then, we will give to the testimony of the saints that credit which is justly their due, we must regard these four truths as beyond doubt. And if there are philosophers and men of the

world who think otherwise of the human heart, and treat all this as the work of imagination and dreaming, a sensible man may be left to judge as to who should be trusted in a matter of this kind—whether it is men who have of themselves no experience of the operations of grace, and who are even ignorant of the experience the saints have had of it; who often have not even read their lives and writings; who have never had any communication with them; who live in profound ignorance of the mysteries of the spiritual life, and who are often so blind even as to the secrets of nature; who so easily become obstinately attached to false opinions, and who in matters which are within their reach unceasingly contradict each other—or are we to trust to holy souls who with so much simplicity, candour, and submission to authority, give testimony of that which they have so often, so continually, and so clearly felt in their interior, souls who are illuminated by an inward light which prevents them from deceiving themselves, and who are so far from wishing to deceive any one? Really, can there be any hesitation as to which is to be believed? Let it be taken for certain, then, as well for the reasons we have given above, as from the authorities we have cited in this article, that the prerogatives of the human heart of which we have spoken in this work are not the work of imagination but realities: and that in the saints this part of the body is specially dear and precious in the sight of God. From this we may conclude (which is the

point we have chiefly in view throughout) what we ought to think of the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ.

Article II.

On the Wound of the Heart of Jesus.

When the cause of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was being considered at Rome by the Congregation of Rites, one of the judges, who was opposed to the devotion, admitted that if it were clear that the Heart of Jesus had really been pierced by the lance, it would be a strong reason for granting the privileges that were requested. This called forth the reply: "Well, is the material and visible wound of this adorable Heart a sufficient motive for its veneration by the Church? and are we to find no such sufficient reason in the wound of love, in the wound of sadness even unto death which that Heart has suffered for us, and in the wound of that deep sorrow for our sins which pierced it on the Cross, and in the wound of that incomprehensible desolation which brought upon Him the Agony and Bloody Sweat? Do not these wounds suffice, I ask—these wounds that faith puts beyond all doubt? Ah! how much more cruel were these invisible wounds than that of the lance! They are far more admirable, far more amiable, far sweeter, far worthier of our contemplation and our affection than the material wound which is as amiable as it is, only because it comes from the wound

of love and is its visible sign. Nevertheless, in order that nothing might be omitted which could serve to obtain for this Divine Heart the honours that are its due, the following researches were made in order to prove that the Heart of Jesus was actually wounded.

This fact can be proved by reasoning based upon the circumstances related in the Gospel, by distinct revelations received by the saints, and by the authority of the Fathers, Doctors, saints, commentators, and masters of the spiritual life,—in a word, by tradition. We shall give here, for the satisfaction of spiritual persons, what was laid before the Congregation of Rites on this occasion.

§ 1.—*The Argument from the Gospel.*

In the first place, the object and design of the soldier who drove his lance into the side of Jesus Christ* was to pierce His Heart. He wished to make sure of His death, and for this purpose he aimed at His Heart. This is the unanimous opinion of the Fathers and commentators who have touched upon this point.

In the second place, the blow was a violent one. Considering the object the soldier had in view and his disposition with regard to our Lord, there can be no doubt of this. The lance must therefore have gone deep into the chest, and consequently it is in the highest degree probable and morally certain that it reached the Heart, which is near the middle of

* St. John xix. 34.

the chest and of considerable size. This argument is strengthened by the size of the wound, into which the hand could be put, as commentators infer from the words of Jesus Christ to St. Thomas: "Bring hither thy hand and put it into My Side."* Now, the size of the wound shows that it was not merely the point of the lance that entered the Sacred Side of Jesus, but the whole spear-head, and on this account we may readily believe that the Heart must have been pierced.

In the third place, it is the general opinion in the Church that our Saviour Jesus Christ shed His Blood for our salvation, even to the last drop. The Fathers of the Church speak in this sense; so do preachers, spiritual writers, and the books of meditations and devotions in common use among the faithful. Now, this universal opinion cannot be true if the Heart of Jesus was not laid open. For otherwise it would not be possible for Him to shed all the Blood in His Sacred Body, for no matter how the veins of a dying man are opened, there always remains some blood in the heart, for death necessarily takes place before all the blood has left the body, and after death, as the beating of the heart ceases, the flow of blood stops at the same time. If, then, it be true that Jesus Christ shed His Blood to the last drop, it must be that His Heart was laid open; and it is on this ground that St. Cyprian, having said in the work on the Twofold Martyrdom which is attri-

* St. John xx. 27.

buted to him, that "Jesus Christ had shed all the Blood which remained in His Heart," the commentators who quote this conclude that St. Cyprian believed that the Heart of Jesus was pierced.

In the fourth place, if we carefully consider the words of the Evangelist, they seem to indicate that the Heart was thus opened. The expression he uses is, "One of the soldiers with a spear opened His side, and immediately there came out blood and water." Weigh well the words, *and immediately there came out blood.*" They give us the impression, as a grave commentator has remarked, that the blood did not come out of the opening drop by drop, but as if the spear in opening the side, had at the same time laid open some cavity where the blood was retained, and from which it came out suddenly with a rush. This certainly is the common opinion of the faithful, as all the painters who represent this mystery show. Now it seems certain that this quantity of still fluid blood could only come from the Heart; for from what other source could it come? There was none left in the veins; and besides we know that the blood remaining in the veins of a dead body ceases to move, and easily clots, but this does not happen so soon in the heart where the blood is in greater quantity, and keeps its warmth and fluidity longer.

Lastly, the mystical reasons that actuated the wisdom and goodness of God in this mystery, and that are related by the holy Fathers, and accepted with approval by the whole Church, have altogether a

far greater force and sweetness if the Heart of Jesus was really pierced, and the blood came from it than if it only came from His side. This is a subject for contemplation rather than explanation. For instance, the love of Jesus Christ for His Spouse the Church is one of the chief reasons given by the Fathers for this outpouring of His Blood, and how much more striking this is supposing that the Divine Spouse gave His Heart, the seat of love, to be wounded. How much sweeter and more amiable is the Wound of the Heart of Jesus, how much more calculated to touch the heart of His Holy Spouse, and excite a mutual love! But, as I have just said, this is a matter rather to be contemplated than spoken of, and the same may be said of the other reasons given by the Fathers, as each one may see for himself in the passages we shall quote from the commentators further on.

§ 2. *Evidence from Revelations.*

In the Revelations of St. Bridget (book i. chap. x.) the Blessed Virgin speaks thus to her: "One of the soldiers approached, and drove the spear which he carried into the side of my Son with such violence that it almost transfixed Him from side to side; and when he drew back his spear it was stained with blood. Then seeing that the Heart of my dear Son was pierced, I felt as if my own were pierced in the same way."

From the same, book ii. chap. xxi.: "He was wounded in the Heart so cruelly, that the soldier did

not stop until the lance had penetrated to the other side."

St. Gertrude, in her Revelations (book ii. chap. v.) speaks thus: "My Lord Jesus Christ, I beg you, *by your Heart pierced with the lance*, to pierce the heart of Gertrude with the darts of your love;" and in her admirable Exercises, of which we have already made mention, she speaks thus in the exercise entitled "Praise and thanksgiving," "O Jesus, my sweet hope, may your deified Heart, torn for love of me, and laid open for all sinners, be a place of refuge for my soul."

St. Mechtildis (*Lib. de Gratiâ Spirituali*, lib. ii. cap. xxii.): "One night, when she could not sleep on account of a violent head-ache, Jesus Christ showed her the Wound of His most amiable Heart, and invited her to enter into it, and take her rest."

St. Frances of Rome (in her Life, based on the process of her canonization, book iii. chap. iv.): "She noticed that from the breast and the sacred wound of this Immaculate Lamb there came forth a spring of living water. She saw in the wound, as it were, an abyss of light. She saw therein the *pierced Heart* of our Lord, and she heard these words repeated, 'If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink.'"

The Blessed Angela of Foligno: "As I was in prayer, and dwelling upon the Passion of our Lord, Jesus Crucified appeared to me, and said to me these words: 'Fear not, my daughter, I have made satisfaction and done penance for all the sins thou hast

committed. . . . For the sins of thy head I was wounded with thorns, and struck with a reed. . . . For the sins of thy heart, such as those of anger, envy, despondency, and inordinate love, I had My Heart pierced with a lance, and thence there came forth a most efficacious balm to cure the passions and the sins of the heart.'"

The Venerable Mother Maria d'Agreda (in the Mystical City of God, part ii. book vi. chap. xxiv. n. 1451) thus records the words of the Blessed Virgin: "My Son, in consequence of the ardent love He had for men, wished to be wounded, not only in the feet and hands, but also in the Heart, which is the throne of love, in order that, entering by the gate thus formed, men might be able to taste of His love and its source, participate in it, and find therein a place of refuge and refreshment."

The Venerable Mother Margaret of the Visitation of Our Lady, of whom we have had so much to say in this part, had a vision in which the Heart of Jesus was shown to her with the wound which it received on the Cross, which was distinctly to be seen in it.

We do not doubt but that other revelations of the same kind on this subject are to be found in the lives of the saints, but we have not thought it necessary to make further researches, because these few testimonies appear to us sufficient, especially if taken in connection with the following authorities.

§ 3. *Authorities.*

We must at the outset make two important remarks —first, that amongst ecclesiastical writers, whether we take the Fathers, the Doctors, the commentators, or the masters of the spiritual life, there is no one who has ever either denied or actually expressed a doubt that the Heart of Jesus was wounded, no one has ever either contradicted or condemned the opinion which asserts that it was so; no one has at any time in any way whatever, suggested that this opinion is doubtful or improbable—in a word, we have on this point no one whatever to contradict us. On the one hand (and this is our second remark), we have a host of writers of every kind, who assert positively, clearly, and expressly that the Heart of Jesus was pierced, and it is well to remark that they do this, not in discussing it as if it were uncertain, but taking it for granted as a truth generally accepted in the Church, as may be seen by their testimony. It is true, and we grant it, that many authors have not expressly spoken of it in their writings, but their silence does not affect the truth, since we have, on the other hand, the explicit opinion of many others who have spoken positively on the subject, seeing that even in the things of faith there are points on which many of the Fathers are silent. God did not reveal the same truths even to all the sacred writers, and no more did He equally enlighten all the Fathers and all the Doctors of the Church on the same mysteries

of faith. He has not equally revealed His secrets at all times. Some of them He has kept hidden for many centuries. He manifests them to His servants when He pleases, and at the time marked out by His Providence. He has not granted to all the saints the same lights, the same visions, the same revelations, the same inspirations of piety, but He has regulated all this according to His will and the designs of His wisdom. Now, for the Church to embrace an opinion, it is sufficient if it is supported by the authority of several Doctors, especially if no one opposes it, and this is precisely the position in which we are with regard to the wound of the Heart of Jesus. The authorities that we shall adduce will not only serve to confirm this truth, but also to edify the reader, and make him feel what we ought to think of the Heart of Jesus, and how worthy an object of our devotion is this adorable Heart, seeing with what tender affection it has been regarded by so many of those who are illustrious for their learning and holiness.

St. Gregory Nazianzen, in his tragedy "*Christus Crucifixus*," about the middle of the work, make the Blessed Virgin speak thus: "I see, my dear daughters, one of the soldiers who have just broken the legs of the two thieves go up to my Son, and thrusting his lance into Him, he tries to pierce His Heart."

Prudentius, in his poem the *Diptychon*, speaks thus of the wound of the side: "Pierced from one side to the other, Jesus sheds blood and water." This expression of Prudentius accords very well with

the revelation of St. Bridget, and should be taken in the same sense.

The famous Gretser, in his work *De Cruce*, (lib. i. cap. xxxv.), considering this expression of the poet, makes this remark: "We need not think," says he, "that Prudentius believed that actually both sides of the Son of God were pierced, but he only wished to convey an idea of the depth of the wound, that is to say, that the thrust of the lance was so violent, that from the right side, at which it was directed, it penetrated to the left, so that the Heart which is towards the left side was pierced by it."

St. Bernard (*De Passione Jesu Christi*, cap. iii.), speaks of the wound of the Heart of Jesus in these terms: "They have pierced not only His hands and His feet and His side, but even His Heart with a thrust of a spear. What need was there that His enemies should wound anew that Sacred Heart, which had already been wounded by another spear, an invisible spear of love? What are you doing, you men that are His foes, and why do you add a second wound to the first? . . . Your Heart, O sweet Jesus, was thus wounded in order that we might make our dwelling-place therein. . . . How could He better show us the ardour of His love than by willing that not only His Body, but even His Heart should be wounded by the spear? . . . Who can fail to love a Heart that has received so many wounds?"

The same (in Sermon 61 on the Canticles): "The

iron pierced His Soul, and came near unto His Heart. The secret of that adorable Heart was disclosed by the wound in His Body, that great sacrament of piety is made manifest, and the bowels of mercy were laid open."

St. Thomas Aquinas (*Opusc.* lviii. cap. xxvii.): "There are three that give testimony on earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood,*—the Spirit which He gave up to His Father when it left His Body, the Water which flowed from His Side, and *the Blood which He shed from His Heart*, are three witnesses to a most ardent love." And in cap. xxviii.: "He shed His Blood from the wound of the side from His Heart in order to inflame and vivify His disciples and many other Christians who are weak and tempted in their faith, and consequently cold, and as it were dead."

St. Vincent Ferrer, in a Good Friday sermon speaks thus: "A soldier, taking his spear, drove it into the side of Jesus Christ. . . . This wound, as has been remarked by Alexander of Hales, was not inflicted on Jesus Christ in that part of the Body where painters usually place it, but lower down, at a point from which the spear would penetrate to the Heart. . . . But why do painters thus represent this wound to the eyes of the faithful? We must reply that painting, being a kind of writing that the ignorant can read, their object is to indicate more clearly that the spear pierced the Heart of Jesus, in order to

* 1 St. John v. 8.

make men better understand that the pardon of our sins originated in that Sacred Heart."

St. Antoninus (*De Doloribus B. Mariæ Virginis*, part iv. tit. xv. chap. xxi.), after having quoted the verse of the Psalm, "They that sought my soul used violence, says: "The enemies of Jesus Christ did violence especially to the three chief parts in which life resides—the Head, the Heart, and the Blood; to the Head by the crown of thorns; to the Heart by the opening of the side. . . . In the Body of the Son of God, nothing remained intact but His tongue and His Heart; but in order that even these parts should not be without their special suffering, His tongue was given gall to drink, and after His death His side was opened with a spear." It is clear that in these two passages the Saint takes it for granted that the spear pierced at once both the side and the Heart.

St. Francis de Sales (book iv. letter xxiii.): "Guard well the heart for which the Heart of God was sorrowful even unto death, and after death was pierced with the spear, in order that after death yours might live."

§ 4.—*The Masters of the Spiritual Life.*

The testimony of these men of contemplation ought to be of great weight in matters of this kind, because the Holy Spirit usually gives them special light upon supernatural things, and especially upon the mysteries of Jesus Christ. We have chosen the most illustrious among them.

The Blessed Henry Suzo, surnamed the *Ecstatic*, on account of the sublimity of his contemplations, speaks thus in one of those which he committed to writing: "O my Jesus! Sovereign Lord of all things, remember the cruel spear that tore your Breast and pierced your Heart when it was already dead. . . . Your wounded Heart has become for us a fountain of living water."

The Ven. Louis de Blois or Blosius, of the Order of St. Benedict, a mystical doctor (in his explanation of the Passion, chap. xix.): "Jesus has opened His Heart to us as His secret chamber, to introduce into it pure souls as His dear spouses. . . . He has given us His Heart so cruelly wounded for us to make our abode therein. . . . Come, my sister, into the holes of the rock. My heart is open to you. Draw near, and I will give you to drink of this new wine, which is nothing but the Precious Blood that flows from My Heart."

Lanspergius, surnamed the *Just*, of the Order of Chartreux (in his fifty-fourth Homily on the Passion) "The wound that Jesus Christ received after His death was neither small nor slight. . . . And this confirms the opinion of many holy people and the truth of certain revelations to the effect that not only was the side of Jesus wounded by the spear, but His Heart also. For our amiable Saviour wished thus to open to us the treasure-house of His Divinity, and to give faithful souls a free entrance into His Heart, which is to them an abundant fountain of delight."

John Taulerus, who has been given the name of the *Sublime Theologian*, says in his Exercises on the Life and Passion of Jesus Christ (in the paragraph entitled *Jesus pierced with a spear*): "What more could He do for us than He has done? He has opened His Heart to us, to receive us therein. He has given us this Sacred Heart so cruelly wounded as the place of our abode, in order that, being purified therein and obtaining perfect conformity with that Divine Heart, we may be worthy to be received with Him into the Heart of the Eternal Father. . . . He has given us His Heart absolutely to be our abode, He asks for our hearts in return, that He Himself may dwell in them. He invites us to enter into those wounds that claim our adoration and love, and especially into His open side. . . . This is why St. Augustine cries out in the Person of Jesus Christ: 'Consider, O man, what I have suffered, and how I have suffered, for thy salvation. . . . I have given My head to be crowned with thorns, My hands and My feet to be pierced with nails. I have shed My Blood to the last drop. Finally, I have opened My Heart for thee, and I have given thee to drink of the Precious Blood that flows therefrom. What more can you ask? Let us draw near, then, to this fountain of living water: He will give us this saving water *freely*.* See how tenderly He invites us to draw from this fountain of life, 'If any man thirst, let him come to Me.† This is the fountain of purest

* Apoc. xxii. 17. † St. John vii. 37.

water that springs up in the midst of Paradise and waters all the earth."

Louis of Granada, one of the greatest lights of the Dominican Order, in his *Memorial*, book vi. speaking of the wound made by the spear, says: "This Sacred Heart was laid open for all, and even for those who who have wounded it so cruelly;" and in the last chapter of book v. he addresses particular prayers to every part of the Body of Jesus Christ, and thus salutes His Divine Heart: "I adore Thee, O sweetest, most loveable, and most merciful Heart, wounded for love of me."

Louis de Ponte, of the Society of Jesus, celebrated for his knowledge of mystical theology (part iv. medit. 53, On the Wound made by the Spear, point ii. n. 1): "It is just that the spear which in punishment for my sins pierced the Heart of the holiest of the sons of men should also pierce the heart of the greatest sinner. . . . Doubtless, it was in atonement for the sins which man had committed by the affections of the heart, that He allowed His Heart, which is the true fountain of life, to be opened."

Same point, n. 2: "By this wound our Saviour wished to manifest the love He bears us and to show that all He did and suffered for us He did and suffered from the motive of the purest love. So that He might repeat these words of the Canticles: 'Thou hast wounded my Heart, My sister, My spouse, thou hast wounded My Heart.'* Twice He says 'Thou

* Cant. iv. 9.

hast wounded;' first with the shaft of love . . . and then with the iron of the spear, in order that by this second wound thou mightest see plainly how much I loved thee . . . . O my God, allow me to enter into your Heart by the opening in your side, and in this furnace of fire may I burn for ever with your love."

Same point, n. 4: "O Divine Spouse of our souls, since you open your wounds to me, I wish with your aid to build myself three tabernacles. . . . The first in the wounds of your feet . . . the second in the wounds of your hands . . . and the third in the wound of your Heart, where, without ceasing, I shall contemplate the love you have shown me."

Alvarez de Paz, of the Society of Jesus, one of the most celebrated masters of Christian perfection that Spain has produced (vol. iii. book iv. part ii. exer. 5), makes this prayer: "I beg you, by the burning love of your Divine Heart and by your pierced human Heart, and by the countless sorrows it suffered, that you will deign to imprint my heart upon your pierced Heart." And at the end of the exercise he says: "Fortify my heart with these holy virtues and strengthen it through the wound of your Sacred Heart."

§ 5.—*Theologians and Commentators on Holy Scripture.*

We have already quoted the authority of St. Thomas and of St. Antoninus, and that of Alexander of Hales, whose testimony is cited by St. Vincent Ferrer.

John Gerson, Chancellor of Paris (on the Passion): "You see that if Jesus had not been already dead,

He could not have lived after this, for the thrust of the spear with which He was wounded in the side penetrated even to His Heart."

Gabriel Biel (in a Discourse on the Passion, part iv. art. 4): "The thrust of the lance, according to Remigius and St. John Damascen, was made, not through the ribs as painters represent it, which the height of the Cross would not have allowed, but below the ribs, so that the lance, being violently driven into the Body, went up as far as the loving Heart of Jesus, and pierced it."

Jerome de Lanuza, of the Dominican Order, Bishop of Barbastro (tom. iv. hom. 47, § 13): "As well as I can judge, this opinion is confirmed by the literal meaning of St. Chrysostom and St. Cyril, who assert that the lance was thrust into Jesus Christ to make sure of His death, so that, even if their eyes deceived them, the work of their hands would not. And this was why it was meant to pierce the Heart." And further on he says, "The lance penetrated to the Heart."

Martin de Bonacina (Tract. de Incarnatione, disp. 3, q. 1. p. 16): "Suarez thinks it probable that Jesus Christ was wounded in the left side, towards which the Heart lies. The reason is, first, that there might be greater certainty of His death, for a man who is wounded in the heart cannot survive; secondly, to give a striking proof of His love for His Spouse the Church, according to the text, 'Thou hast wounded My Heart, My sister, My spouse;'* and thirdly, to

* Cant. iv. 9.

make known to the faithful that the way was open for them to enter into the Heart of Jesus and make their abode therein."

Francis Lucas Brugensis, Dean of St. Omer (*In Joannem*, tom. ii. cap. xix. v. 34): "One of the soldiers thrusting his spear first into the side, then into the lung, and then the pericardium, at last pierced the Heart. . . . He did this partly through impulse, partly as a precaution—a precaution because, as St. Cyprian says, doubting that He was dead, he wished to make sure of it, and in case He was not dead he meant to despatch Him by this thrust which went to the Heart. . . . In this we must admire the Divine Providence which wished, on the one hand, to make certain and evident that Jesus was dead, and on the other, to make strikingly manifest the immense love of Jesus Christ for us, in that He spared no part of Himself, but sacrificed everything for us. Until then the Heart of Jesus, so far as its substance was concerned, had not been touched. In order, then, to show that for our redemption He had not spared the principal part of His Body, He allowed His Heart to be wounded, so as to convince us that He had given Himself wholly to us." . . . And further on he says: "Besides, in order to make known to us the more clearly that He had really given us His Heart, He willed that the Blood should burst forth suddenly from this wound. We are not told that the Blood trickled down, but that 'there came out Blood,' which indicates that it burst out in abundance as if from

some full source. Now *the source of the blood is the heart.*"

Sylveira, the Carmelite (*In Evang.* tom. v. lib. viii. cap. xx. qq. 4 et 5, n. 20): "The soldier pierced with his spear the Heart of Jesus Christ. That the spear penetrated to the Heart is the opinion of Gabriel of St. Vincent and others on the twenty-seventh chapter of Ezechiel." . . . (*Ibid.* n. 21): "The spear driven into the left side penetrated to the Heart." . . . (*Ibid.* n. 26): "The soldier pierced our Saviour's side with his spear, so that His Heart was transfixed."

Joannes de Gregorio, an Augustinian (tom. iv. part v. lib. lxii.), after having cited the authority of many grave writers, and the revelations of St. Bridget, comes to the following conclusion: "From all this it is evident that it was the right side of Jesus that was pierced with the spear, and this with such violence that His Heart was transfixed."

Daniel Mallonius, of the Congregation of St. Jerome, in his work on the Holy Winding Sheet, asks: "Why did Jesus will that His Heart should be pierced?" And he gives the following reasons for it: "First, that there could be no better proof of His death; secondly, because there could be no better indication of His love than this wound of His very Heart; thirdly, because Jesus Christ could nowhere prepare for us a more loveable and a dearer abode than in His Heart; fourthly, because having given Himself wholly to us in life, He desired to do so again after

His death; and as He had not shown that He had given us His Heart, He willed that it should be pierced in order to make it evident that He had retained nothing for Himself."

Ludolph of Saxony, the Carthusian (in his *Life of Christ*, part ii. cap. lxiii.), uses these words: "By this opening of the Heart of Jesus, whence as from an abundant fountain the price of our salvation came forth, our own hearts, wounded with His love, are led to compassionate Him in His sufferings."

Salmeron (*In Evang.* tom. x. tr. 48): "The Heart of Jesus wounded after His death, offers us a remedy for our ills. . . . They have opened with the spear His side and His Heart. . . . This opening of the side signifies that the Heart of Jesus was struck and wounded for love of us."

Cornelius à Lapide (*In Joannem*, xix. 32): "Jesus Christ when dying desired to give us His Heart; for that Sacred Heart was pierced by the spear in order that by thus giving us even His Heart He might give Himself entirely to us."

Barradas (tom. iv. lib. vii. cap. xxii.): "It is asked, 'Did the soldier pierce the Heart of Jesus Christ?' St. Bridget asserts that he did, and St. Cyprian (*De Duplici Martyrio*) indicates it when he says that Jesus Christ shed all the Blood that remained in His Heart. Gabriel is of the same opinion, for he says that the spear thrust in under the ribs on the right side penetrated to the Heart."

The same commentator lower down adds these

words: "The soldier laid open the side of Jesus Christ, he laid open His Heart, he laid open the bowels of mercy, never to be closed again."

Tirinus (*In Joannem*, cap. xxix.): "St. Cyril says that the soldier opened the side of our Lord to make sure of His death. . . . The same Saint, as well as Innocent III., says that the water that came from the side was real natural water, not a product of corruption in the dead Body, but the fluid that was contained in the pericardium. Now by the opening of the pericardium the death of Jesus Christ was put beyond doubt, and this was an evident sign that the spear had pierced the pericardium."

Menochius (*In Joannem*, cap. xix.): "Others hold that it was the left side that was opened, and that in this way the spear had pierced the Heart of Jesus. But this is not a sufficient reason, for the spear might just as well have pierced the Heart even if the thrust was made on the right side."

James Pinto, of the Society of Jesus (*Christus Crucifixus*, lib. v. tit. i. loc. 6): "Of all the deeds inspired by mercy done upon the Cross, the greatest and the noblest was that Jesus Christ willed that His Heart should be rent open, as if it was not enough that His Body should be torn by the nails and the wounds with which it was covered. He wished to show not only by the wounds of His Body, but also by this opening of His Heart, how great was His compassion for our miseries. Jesus Christ, truly the High Priest of mercy, for us displays to His Father

His Heart, melted with the fire of love and sorrow, and He might justly say, in the words of the Prophet, 'My Heart is become like wax melting in the midst of my bowels.'"*

James Lobbetius, a theologian of the Society of Jesus (*Tractatus de Passione*, cap. ix.): "The soldier drove his lance from the right side towards the left, with such force that the point of the lance going through the Heart, penetrated to the ribs of the left side. It was thus that the loving Heart of Jesus was torn asunder."

Eusebius Nieremberg, of the Society of Jesus (in a little treatise entitled *Jesus Crucified, the Book of Life*, p. 6), under the heading, "The Heart and side of Jesus pierced," speaks thus: "That part of man which is most ill-regulated is the heart: for this reason it was fitting that, in order to purify it, the breast of Jesus should be wounded with a spear, the point of which pierced His very Heart, burning with love for God and for man. O my Saviour, your Heart was already wounded with the darts of love: what need was there that it should receive this second wound? O infinite charity of Jesus Christ, for which life was not enough! but which He desired to manifest to us even after His death by opening to us His Heart. . . . Ah, my soul! since the door is open, enter into this hidden chamber of love. The beloved disciple has told us that Jesus loved us 'even to the end,'†—He has done so even beyond the end by giving us His

* Psalm xxi. 15. † St. John xiii. 1.

Heart after death itself. . . . See, the breast of Jesus is laid open, His Heart is torn asunder, and yet we would keep our will unbroken!"

Lyræus, of the Society of Jesus (*De Imit. Jesu patientis*, lib. v. cap. vi.): "It was indeed barbarous cruelty that led to the piercing of this adorable Heart with a spear when it was already dead, and no one had anything to fear from it. . . . Jesus willed that His breast should thus be laid open in order to nourish us with the Blood of His very Heart, as the pelican feeds its young."

Ribadeneira, well known in the Church by his works, which are so full of learning and spirituality, speaks thus in his *Life of Christ*: "One of the soldiers thrust his spear into the sacred side of Jesus Christ, and opened His Heart. . . . He willed to be thus wounded in the Heart, in order that thence might flow, as from a fountain of life, the purest and most precious drops of His Blood."

Jerome Drexelius, of the Society of Jesus (in his work, *Christus Jesus moriens*, part ii. cap. viii. § 3): "The third fountain that springs from Jesus crucified is the water that comes from His side. . . . These are the words that Jesus Christ speaks to the faithful: 'I gave My people water from the rock, but to you I have given it from My side and from My Heart.' . . . This is the water promised by Ezechiel, when he said, 'I will pour upon you clean water.'* . . . See how the Mother of Jesus pours this water from her

* Ezech. xxxvi. 25.

eyes, and her Son pours it at once from His eyes and from His Heart."

We need not dwell further on this point and quote other authors. Suffice it to say, that all the writers who have touched upon this subject, whether they be commentators on Scripture, or writers of sacred history, or masters of the spiritual life—all without exception tread in the footsteps of the authorities we have quoted, and speak in the same way, so that we may say with truth that it is a generally received opinion in the Church.

§ 6. *The Tradition.*

The existence of this is proved by all we have just said; for what more is needed to establish the truth of a tradition than the reliable testimony of so many writers, who all speak of the wound of the Heart of Jesus, and take it for granted as a truth that rests upon common consent, as is clear from the passages we have quoted?

Add to this (and it is in this matter a point of the first importance) the universal conviction of the faithful throughout the Church. For ask all of them, whatever be their state or position, if the Heart of Jesus was wounded on the Cross for our salvation, and they will answer without hesitation, "Yes." Mothers teach this to their children, preachers to their people. This is what we are told by the spiritual books in use among the faithful; this is what we read about this mystery in every book of meditations;

this is how all contemplative writers put it before us. Finally, all who have painted pictures of the Heart of Jesus represent it in no other way to the eyes of the faithful. Could we have any surer or clearer evidence of the existence of a constant tradition handed down from father to son from the times of the early Christians to our own?

Part the Third.

The Practice of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Every devotion consists of acts of two kinds: first, the interior acts, which are those of the mind, and secondly, the exterior, in which the body and the senses take part. The exterior acts are known to every one, those of the interior are less known though more important. These latter belong to the three powers of the soul, the memory, the understanding, and the will. Each of these three powers has acts that peculiarly belong to it, and are essential to every special devotion. The acts of the understanding consist of that knowledge and appreciation of the object of the devotion which make known to us its perfections and give us a just idea of its excellence; hence arises an appreciation of it proportioned to our knowledge. The acts of the will are those affections which also arise from our knowledge of the object and which correspond to its nature and excellence, such as adoration, humility, love, confidence, gratitude, &c. Finally, the acts of the

memory are nothing more than the frequent recollection of the same object and of the qualities which make it worthy of our veneration. Such is a general idea of the interior part of any devotion.

As for the exterior, since it consists of acts that are familiar to all there is no need of a lengthy explanation. It will suffice to say in a word that all the external acts that are calculated to give outward evidence of the interior devotion constitute, what we may properly call, the exterior devotion. On this point it is well to remark that among these exterior practices there are some that are so specially fitted to some particular devotion that they cannot be adapted to any other, as certain exercises and forms of prayer directed to a special object. On the other hand, many external acts are by their nature indifferent, and are adapted to any particular devotion only by the intention of those who practise them, or by the circumstances which direct them to one object rather than another; of this class are novenas, Masses, the frequentation of the sacraments, alms-deeds, mortifications, acts of humility, charity, &c.

To make all this clearer, let us put this matter in the form of an example. Take, for instance, devotion to the Blessed Virgin, which is so dear to all Christians. What are the interior acts of this devotion. The matter is very simple:

1. On the part of the understanding these acts consist of the knowledge which this the first power of the soul ought to have of the excellence of the Mother

of God, of her dignity, her power, her bountiful goodness, her mercy, her virtues, her graces, her privileges, &c., hence arises an esteem for her proportioned to the greatness of this incomparable creature. If this knowledge is wanting, it is evident that the whole basis of the devotion is wanting. So much for the understanding.

2. As for the acts of the will, they consist of those affections which arise from the knowledge of which we have just spoken, such as veneration, confidence, love, gratitude, zeal, &c. And on this point we must remark that since these affections are always in proportion to our knowledge of the perfection and greatness of the Blessed Virgin, they are more or less lively according as that knowledge is more or less perfect.

3. Finally, the acts of the memory consist of a frequent and familiar recollection of the Blessed Virgin, which leads us to have recourse to her in all our needs and to honour and love her unceasingly. This is an outline of the interior devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

As for the exterior, it consists of all the practices which the senses can take note of and which are expressly consecrated by usage to the honour of the Mother of God, such as confraternities, pilgrimages, visits to her chapels, prayers in her honour, offices, litanies, the rosary and chaplet, &c. And as for those actions which by their nature are indifferent and common to all devotions, as we have said before, they

may be made to belong to the devotion to the Blessed Virgin when they are the result of the interior part of the devotion, or when they are directed to her honour by the intention of those who practise them.

This being understood, as in this Third Book we have to treat of the practice of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we must, in order to give a clear and sufficient idea of it, speak of the interior worship which is due to this adorable Heart, and of the exterior worship which should accompany the interior. We shall do this in a few words.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE INTERIOR WORSHIP OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

It follows from the principles we have just established that the interior worship of the Heart of Jesus must be said to consist of—on the part of the understanding—that knowledge which manifests to us the excellence of this Divine Heart, its dignity, its holiness, its greatness, its virtues, its prerogatives, its love, its sufferings, the treasures of grace it contains, in a word, all that makes this Divine Heart the most worthy object of the delight of the Eternal Father, and of the adoration and love of mankind. From the knowledge of all this there should arise in the understanding an infinite esteem of the Sacred Heart. This is the essential basis of the whole devotion. Thus the first care of those who wish to take part in it should be to acquire this knowledge, and this is done by reading, by meditation, and by prayer. All that we have said in the two preceding books may be made use of for this end. But whatever book one reads for this purpose, one should be thoroughly convinced that a superficial perusal or passing reflection upon it is not enough. Serious attention must be

given to it, and this must be accompanied by that docility which grace requires, and by humble prayer which is capable of drawing down from Heaven the light that gives us to understand and to relish those supernatural and interior things to which unaided human reason cannot attain. We must remember that God hides from the proud and the wise, according to this world, what He reveals to the humble.*

Once the understanding is fully enlightened as to the excellence of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, it necessarily produces in the will those affections which correspond to that excellence, such as adoration, thanksgiving, praise, love, gratitude, confidence, imitation of its virtues, zeal for its glory, sorrow for the injuries it suffers, desires to make reparation for them, and so forth. So much for the understanding and the will. We must add to this, on the part of the memory, a frequent and familiar recollection of this adorable Heart, which will keep it before us in our actions and make us often repeat the homage it deserves and the acts that are pleasing to it, especially if we make use of this Divine Heart as a means to perfect our actions. For here we must make this important remark that as there is nothing in the whole universe more agreeable to the Eternal Father than the Heart of His Son, it is an excellent practice (which God Himself has many times revealed, as we shall show later on) to make use of this adorable

* "Abscondisti hæc a sapientibus et prudentibus, et revelasti ea parvulis" (St. Matt. xi. 25).

Heart to perfect our actions, by offering its infinitely holy dispositions to the Eternal Father. Thus whether we are acting, or enduring, or praying, we should do everything in union with the Sacred Heart. Through it we adore God, we praise Him, we love Him, we thank Him, we offer ourselves to Him, we beg of Him pardon for our sins, and so forth. And since the exercise of reparation, as we have explained it above, is essential to this devotion, and our Lord has revealed that He takes pleasure in it, we make it a duty to repeat often before His altars the acts of reparation He has prescribed. Further, all we have here said of the interior worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus will shortly be confirmed by examples taken from the saints and masters of the spiritual life.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE EXTERIOR WORSHIP OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

THIS worship consists of all those exterior practices which are consecrated to the honour of the Heart of Jesus—such as to celebrate its feast, to venerate its images, to visit its altars, to be enrolled in its confraternities, to make novenas in its honour, to recite prayers which contain its praises, to hear Mass, receive Holy Communion, fast, and perform other acts of virtue in its honour. But for the edification and satisfaction of those who wish to practise the devotion to the Heart of Jesus, we must enter into these points more in detail for the sake of explaining them. There are practices for each year, each month, each week, and each day. Let us explain the more important of them.

§ 1. *Each year.*

The first practice and the most important of all is the observance of the Feast which our Lord Himself instituted and which one should celebrate each year on the day assigned to it. Usually every devotion has its own special and particular feasts. The devotion to the Heart of Jesus should not be without this

privilege. Jesus Christ has fixed for the day of the feast the first Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, and in His providence He has obtained its celebration wherever the devotion is known. On that day the Feast of the Heart of Jesus is kept by all the confraternities established in various parts of the Christian world. It is a day that should be solemnly observed, and, as far as possible, entirely devoted to honouring the Sacred Heart.

But in order to discharge this duty with the interior sentiments that it demands, and without which all the rest would be worth but little, one should fully understand the nature of the feast, what object Jesus Christ had in view in instituting it, what should be the intention and end of those who celebrate it, and by what feelings and affections they should be animated. For this end, what we have set forth in the preceding parts should be carefully read and attentively considered, and the mind and heart should be full of it. Supposing this has been done, the following are the principal practices by means of which the day of the feast should be sanctified:

I. According to the pious practice of the faithful in devotions of every kind, one should approach the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. But we should remark that inasmuch as the nature of the feast requires us to have a special intention, which should be as it were the soul of all the exercises that belong to it, namely, to atone and make reparation for the outrages committed against Jesus in the

Blessed Sacrament, we should, in order to attain this end, in our confession for that day accuse ourselves in particular of, and conceive as lively a detestation as we can for, all the sins of that class that we may have committed throughout life—immodest conduct before the Blessed Sacrament, irreverence, coldness, neglect, forgetfulness, carelessness, scandal, sacrilege, &c. Then we should approach the Holy Table and receive the Body of Jesus Christ with all the more fervour, seeing that the Communion of that day ought to make reparation for our negligences in all others. After Communion, or at some other time in the day, we should make the act of reparation to the Heart of Jesus which He has prescribed as a practice essentially belonging to the feast. This reparation is nothing more than an act of sorrow, mingled with love and confusion, coming from the depths of the heart and arising from the sight of the outrages and neglect which Jesus has suffered, and has each day to suffer, in the Holy Eucharist. Prostrate in spirit at the feet of our Divine Saviour we show Him our sorrow, and try by profoundly adoring Him and paying Him every kind of homage, to make Him compensation and reparation for all the offences we have ourselves committed against Him and those committed by an infinite number of others, and we would thus cancel them if it were possible.

II. Another practice of those which are best adapted for the feast is upon that day to pay frequent visits to

the Blessed Sacrament. But on this day these visits should be made with such modesty, piety, and reverence, manifest in the whole exterior, as will show to every one the interior spirit that should accompany them, namely, the desire and intention to make reparation for the irreverences committed in those holy places that are hallowed by the presence of Jesus Christ. As far as possible, one should arrange always to make three of these visits: the first will be to thank Jesus Christ for having instituted this sacrament of love, for having so often fed us with His Flesh and Blood in the many Communions we have made, and for the infinite graces which have been given to us by means of this Divine Sacrament. The intention of the second visit will be to make reparation to Him for the fearful outages He has suffered in the Blessed Sacrament at the hands of heretics and Jews, and for the irreverences and sacrileges committed by Catholics. The third visit will be to make reparation for the neglect of so many Christians who quite forget Jesus Christ in this mystery, and pass their lives without paying Him a single visit; and also to adore in spirit our Divine Saviour in so many deserted churches in which He is so poorly lodged and served, and in which He passes days and nights all alone in complete abandonment with no one to adore Him. For a faithful heart there is nothing more touching or better calculated to excite a tender solid devotion than these subjects of meditation which should occupy the mind during these holy visits.

III. The recital of prayers composed in honour of the Heart of Jesus is another exercise well adapted for the feast, and cannot fail to be of great assistance to interior devotion. Those prayers that contain the praises of the Sacred Heart should be very familiar to all who are devout to the Heart of Jesus. At the end of this book are to be found a chaplet, litanies, and various forms of acts of adoration, love, oblation, confidence, petition, &c., the practice of which cannot fail to be most useful and agreeable to those who will make use of them.

IV. Finally, as it is the universal practice of the Church, suggested by the Holy Spirit, and followed by all the faithful, to exercise oneself on the eve and the day of a great feast in works of penance, charity, mercy, piety, humility, &c., in order to prepare to receive the graces which on such solemn days God is wont to bestow more abundantly on souls that are in the proper dispositions, those who are devout to the Heart of Jesus should not fail to observe this pious practice on the eve and day of the feast, which they should regard as one of the greatest in the year, all the more because our Lord has promised that on that day He will bestow upon those who honour His Sacred Heart an abundance of His choicest favours.

§ 2. *Each month.*

Besides the principal feast, which only comes once a year, the first Friday in each month has been consecrated to the Heart of Jesus. On this day fervent

souls should repeat wholly or in part the exercises we have just assigned for the day of the feast—confess, communicate, visit the Blessed Sacrament, make the act of reparation, &c. To devout persons, whom it specially concerns, this monthly practice cannot be burdensome, since there are none of them who do not approach the sacraments many times each month. The first Friday can therefore be chosen for Communion, instead of one of their other usual days. If a day of devotion fell upon it they would not fail to keep it, and those who are devout to the Heart of Jesus should regard this first Friday as a feast that is peculiarly their own.

§ 3. *Each week and each day.*

For those who are inspired with devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, it is not enough to honour it once a month. They have, moreover, a day in each week set apart for the practice, this is the Friday, on which day each according to his own choice should perform some exercise belonging to the devotion. At the outset there were found persons who did not approve of thus devoting certain days in each month and week to honouring the Heart of Jesus. They wished that we should confine ourselves to the day of the feast, and they said that since our Lord had selected the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, we should be content with that and add nothing more. But it was answered that it is the constant practice in all established devotions to

have not only a principal feast once a year, but also other days devoted to the same purpose each month and each week. Thus the Friday in each week is devoted to the commemoration of the Passion, the Thursday to honouring the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, the Saturday to devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the Tuesday to the Angels, and so with the rest. Why then condemn in the case of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus what the Church approves in all others? Besides, if it is a thing that is pleasing to God to honour the Heart of His Son once a year, who does not see that it must be still more pleasing to Him to renew this homage on several days in the year? Finally, since our Lord has deigned to express the desire He has to see His Heart honoured by men, what more do we want to inspire us with devotion to that Sacred Heart, not only on one day in the year, or on one day in each month or each week, but, moreover, every day, and, if possible, every hour? This, indeed, is the constant practice of those who are truly devout to the Heart of Jesus, and who have made themselves familiar with this beautiful devotion. They do not pass a day or an hour without practising it. Whether they go to the Altar or to Communion, whether they hear Mass or visit the Blessed Sacrament, whether they pray or do any good work, they have the Heart of Jesus present in their thoughts. They unite themselves to it, to its intentions, to its desires, to its feelings. They pray through it; through it they adore; through it they love; through

it they make their petitions; through it they make their thanksgivings; through it they go to the Eternal Father, and they offer it unceasingly to His justice and His mercy, in order to gain access to the throne of His Majesty and find favour before Him. Finally, it is through it they strive to make pleasing in His sight all that they do and all that they suffer for His glory. We shall see in the following chapter what has been the practice of the saints in this matter, and at the same time we shall recognize the fact that the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is not an invention of our days, but that in past ages God inspired with it souls illustrious for their sanctity.

CHAPTER III.

VARIOUS PRACTICES IN HONOUR OF THE HEART OF JESUS TAKEN FROM THE WRITINGS OF THE SAINTS AND MASTERS OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

Practice taken from Blosius.

Blosius, of the Order of St. Benedict, one of the most celebrated masters of the spiritual life in the last two centuries, in many parts of his works recommends devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. "Take care," he says, in his *Speculum Spirituale*, cap. vii. "to offer all your good works and practices to the most sweet and most blessed Heart of Jesus Christ, that He may purify and perfect them. For His Heart, all full of tenderness and love, takes delight in this, and is always ready in an excellent manner to perfect what is imperfect in you." "Spiritual persons," he says in another place, "ought to have the practice of recommending their actions to the most sweet and loving Heart of Jesus Christ united inseparably to the Heart of the Godhead, whence flows every kind of good, in order that they may be corrected and perfected thereby." He repeats the same thing in the book which he entitles *Farrago utilissimarum institutionum*, where, among the points which he sets down as most worthy of attention, he speaks thus: "Let him who wishes to

apply himself to the spiritual life take care to recommend to the Heart of Jesus Christ his actions and practices, that this Sacred Heart may correct what is defective in them and make them perfect." Then, in another of his writings, putting in practice his own instructions, he prays thus to the Eternal Father: "Heavenly Father, I offer to you the ardent love and burning desires of the Heart of Jesus, your well-beloved Son, to make amends for the dryness and coldness of my weak heart." Finally, in his *Articuli Vitæ Christi*, art. 23, speaking of the Heart of Jesus, he cries out: "God grant that this loving and amiable Heart, in which is contained all that is sweetest in all happiness, may be at my death my safety and my consolation, and after my death the place of my eternal repose." Similar passages relating to the Heart of Jesus are to be found in the works of this holy man, from which we may easily imagine what esteem he had for this devotion.

Practice taken from Lanspergius.

John Lanspergius, the Carthusian, who, by his eminent piety, won the surname of the Just, and who is well known for his knowledge of spiritual things, on which he has left us many beautiful works, very clearly indicates the esteem he had for the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in a book which he wrote to excite souls to the love of God and to the desire of perfection.* At the very beginning of it

* "Pharetra divini amoris apostolicæque perfectionis" (lib i. p. v.).

he gives us these instructions: "Try to excite yourself to devotion to the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, the overflowing fountain of love and mercy, and practise this devotion carefully. Unite yourself by love to this Divine Heart, and in spirit enter into it. Let it be through it that you ask for the favours you wish to obtain, and through it that you offer to God your practices of piety, for this Divine Heart is the treasury of all graces, and the gate by which we should go to God, and by which God comes to us. Have by you, to keep alive your devotion, some picture of this adorable Heart. Place it in some place where you can often see it, that the sight of it may remind you of your practices towards it and enkindle in you the fire of Divine love. You may even, according to the interior impulse you feel, kiss the picture lovingly with the same devotion with which you would kiss the Heart of Jesus. Enter in spirit into this deified Heart, impress with fervour your own heart upon it, plunge your whole soul into it, desiring that it may be absorbed therein, striving to draw into your own heart the spirit that animates the Heart of Jesus, its graces, its virtues, in a word, all the saving power of that Sacred Heart, a power that no one can measure, for the Heart of Jesus is an overflowing fountain of all good. Thus it is a very holy and very useful practice to honour it with devotion, and to have recourse to it in all our wants, in order to draw from this sacred fount consolation for ourselves and all the help we need."

Practice taken from Alvarez de Paz.

Father James Alvarez de Paz, of the Society of Jesus, was, according to general belief, one of the most excellent masters of the spiritual life that Spain has ever produced. In the works he has written on the subject he speaks in various places of the Heart of Jesus, and especially in vol. iii. book iv. This is the instruction that he gives: "Try to enter into the Heart of Jesus, in order to contemplate it as it really is, that you may form your heart to the likeness of this Divine Heart. This Heart is the way by which we reach the place of our eternal rest, which is no other than the Divinity of Jesus Christ. It is the gate by which we enter in to contemplate the Divinity. If, then, you wish to attain to this contemplation, and to inflame yourself with the love of God, endeavour by earnest meditation to enter into the Heart of Jesus, the purest and holiest of all hearts, in order to conform your heart to it either by the affections of prayer, or by the toil of action." And a little further on, when adding a practice on the same subject, he exclaims: "O Jesus, Saviour of mankind, in the imitation of Whom all our perfection consists, open to me, I conjure you, your Sacred Heart, the gate of life and the fountain of the waters of grace, in order that, through this Divine Heart, I may enter into the knowledge of yourself, and that I may be able to drink of the saving waters of true virtue which quench all thirst for earthly things."

Practice revealed to the Ven. Mother Mary of the Incarnation, the Ursuline.

This incomparable nun, whom we have already mentioned in the preceding book, has been called with good reason the Teresa of France. Led by an altogether miraculous devotion, and filled with an apostolic spirit and courage beyond that of her sex, she crossed the seas in 1640, and went to labour in Canada for the conversion and education of the women and girls of the savages. For this object she established in the New World a convent of her Order at the cost of toils that surpassed the ordinary strength of a woman, and in the exercise of zeal like this she persevered till her death with a fervour that never lessened. Her life was full of wonders through the heroic virtues she practised, the supernatural gifts with which she was abundantly endowed, the rare favours given her by her Divine Spouse, the ineffable communications made to her by God, the infused understanding of the Scriptures and the mysteries of faith, and finally by the experience she had of all states of the interior life, which rendered her a complete mistress of the science of spirituality; so that those who had the direction of her conscience, judging that these wonders of grace should not remain hidden, but that if they were known they might be of infinite service for the edification and advantage of the faithful, obliged her, as had been formerly done to St. Teresa, to write an account

of her life and of the favours she had received from God. No one can read this narrative without admiring it, and without seeing that, as she herself confessed, it is not so much her own work as that of the Spirit which possessed her. In fact, as one reads in it all the unspeakable wonders of the supernatural ways through which she passed, one feels strongly that of itself the human mind is not capable of treating with such sublimity and clearness of a matter so profound and so far removed from its natural sphere of action.

To come to our subject, this admirable servant of God had an extraordinary devotion to the Heart of Jesus, at a time when, the devotion being still unknown, she could have learned nothing of it from men. It was from God Himself she learned it, by means of a Heaven-sent revelation. She herself relates as follows what occurred to her on this point. The passage is to be found in the second book of her Autobiography, chap. x. :

"My interior life was continually growing stronger, as well as my unceasing pleadings before the Eternal Father for the increase of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in all the poor souls who knew Him not. But one night, when I was recommending this great affair to Him, I understood by an interior light that His Divine Majesty did not listen to me and was not, as was usually the case, propitious to my desires and entreaties. This pierced my heart with intense pain, accompanied by self-abasement and a

willing submission to His Divine justice for what was wanting on my part; for on the part of my Spouse I saw nothing but equity, and I should have been willing to suffer every imaginable pain in order to be in such a state of purity as was needful to gain my end and move the Heart of the Eternal Father, so that my well-beloved Spouse, whom He had made King of the nations, might come into peaceful possession of them by their conversion. I saw through my soul that the Eternal Father was pleased with my persistent pleadings for so just a cause, but that He desired of me something else which was wanting to me, so that I might be heard. I annihilated myself at His feet, I sunk myself at the very depths of my own baseness and nothingness in order that His Divine goodness might be pleased to bestow on me whatever He wished to see in me, that I might deserve to be heard in favour of my Spouse. Then I felt a ray of Divine light stealing into my soul, and it was immediately followed by these words: 'Pray to Me through the Heart of Jesus, My well-beloved Son. Through Him it is that I will hear you and grant what you desire.' From that moment the spirit which directed me united me to the Divine and most adorable Heart of Jesus, so that I spoke and breathed only through it. I felt continually fresh infusions of graces through this Divine Heart, which led me to conceive wonderful thoughts, such as my pen or my tongue cannot express, on the subject of the Kingdom

of Jesus Christ. This happened about the year 1635. In all this I addressed myself to the Eternal Father, and my aspirations, which were the outcome of what I felt in my soul, seemed to me like so many burning arrows, which continually darted into the Heart of the Eternal Father; not that I pictured to myself anything corporeal, but speaking of their efficacy I cannot otherwise express myself. It seemed to me that I knew all the souls that were won for the Son of God, in whatever part of the earth they might be, and my love especially directed itself to those who were the most abandoned in those savage countries where in spirit I was continually occupied."

After the reception of this favour, Mother Mary of the Incarnation did not cease for a single day of her life to honour the Heart of Jesus. The reader will be glad to learn from herself what was the method she adopted in this devotion by a special inspiration of the Holy Spirit. She relates it in a letter to be found in an appendix to chap. xiii. book iii. of her Life. These are her words:

"You ask me to tell you some of my practices of devotion. You know that those devotions which are performed by a number of particular acts are very difficult to me, but I may tell you plainly that I have one with which God has inspired me, and of which I think I have spoken to you when writing to you before this—it is devotion to the most adorable Heart of Jesus. I have practised it for nearly thirty years, and this is the motive that led me to take it up. One

evening in my cell, when I was pleading with the Eternal Father for the conversion of souls, and wishing with an ardent desire for the complete establishment of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, it seemed to me that the Eternal Father did not hear me, and did not, as He was wont, look upon me with an eye of mercy, and this afflicted me very much. But at that very moment an interior voice said to me, 'Pray to Me through the Heart of My Son, through Him it is that I will hear you.' This Divine influence had its effect upon me, and all my soul was put in closest communication with this adorable Heart, so that I could henceforth speak to the Eternal Father only through it. This occurred to me about eight or nine o'clock in the evening, and ever since I have always concluded my devotions for the day about that hour with this practice. I do not remember ever having failed in this, unless, indeed, when prevented by illness, or by my soul not being free in its action. When I am free to choose, I speak somewhat in this way when I address the Eternal Father:

"'It is through the Heart of Jesus, for me the way, the truth, and the life, that I approach you, O Eternal Father. Through this Divine Heart I adore you for all those who do not adore you, I love you for all those who in their wilful blindness insult you by knowing you not. I wish through this Divine Heart to make satisfaction for the obligations of all men. In spirit I go round the world, and seek out all those souls that have been ransomed with the Precious

Blood of my Divine Spouse. I embrace them in order through Him to present them to you, and through Him to ask you for their conversion. Can it be, O Eternal Father, that you will permit that they shall not know my Jesus, that they shall not live for Him Who has died for all? You see, O Divine Father, that as yet they do not live. Ah, grant that they may live through this Divine Heart. Through this Divine Heart I present to you your poor servants N. and N. In the name of my Spouse, I beg that you will fill them with His Spirit, and that they may be eternally united to you under the protection of this Divine and Sacred Heart,' &c. Then I address myself to the Incarnate Word, saying to Him, 'You know, my well Beloved, all that I wish to say to your Father through your Divine Heart, and through your blessed Soul. In saying it to Him I say it to you, because you are in the Father, and the Father is in you. Accomplish all this therefore with Him. I present to you all these souls; grant that they may be one with you,' &c. This is my practice of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

"Then, considering what I owe to the Word I say to Him, 'O my Divine Spouse, how shall I repay you for your exceeding charity in my regard? It is through your Blessed Mother that I desire to make my thanksgiving to you. I offer you her Sacred Heart as I offer yours to your Father; I love you through this Sacred Heart, which has loved you so

much. I offer you those sacred breasts that suckled you, and that virginal womb that formed your resting-place. I make you this offering, I repeat, in thanks-giving for all your gifts, whether of nature or of grace. I make you this offering for the amendment of my life and the sanctification of my soul; I present it to you that you may be pleased to grant me grace and final perseverance in your service and in your love. I give you thanks, my Divine Spouse, that you have been pleased to choose this most holy Virgin for your Mother, that you deigned to be borne for nine months in her womb, and that you have been pleased to give her to us as our Mother. I adore the moment of your Incarnation within her, and all the Divine moments of your life of exile upon earth. I give you thanks for having by your labours and the shedding of your Precious Blood, not only given us an example for our lives, but also made them meritorious. I desire to have neither life nor power of movement except through your life. Purify, then, my impure and imperfect life by the purity and perfection of your Divine life, and by the holy life of your Blessed Mother.'

"Then I turn to the Blessed Virgin, and I say to her all that love can suggest, always in the same spirit and with the same intentions as above. Thus I bring my devotions to a close when I retire for the night."

Practice taken from a Vision and Revelation made to the Venerable Mother Margaret Mary of the Order of the Visitation.

As we are relating the revelations which some of the spouses of Jesus Christ have received regarding the devotion to the Sacred Heart, it is right that we should not forget the nun of the Convent of Paray, of whom we have already spoken in the first book, and whom God employed to make this beautiful devotion known in our days. In a letter which she wrote to her spiritual director, she relates a vision and revelation bearing directly upon our subject. These are her words:

"As to the signal favours which my Saviour has vouchsafed to me with regard to the devotion to the Sacred Heart, I cannot undertake to narrate them in detail. I here tell you all I can, in order to fulfil the commands of my superiors. One day, on the feast of St. John the Evangelist, after having received from my Divine Saviour a favour very like that which the Beloved Disciple received on the night of the Last Supper, this Divine Heart was represented to me as upon a throne all made up of fire and flame, throwing out rays of light in every direction, and more brilliant than the sun, and transparent as crystal. The wound that it received upon the Cross was plainly to be seen. There was a crown of thorns around the Sacred Heart, and a cross at the top of it. My Divine Saviour gave me to understand that these instruments of His Passion signified that the un-

measured love which He had for men had been the source of all the sufferings and humiliations that He was pleased to suffer for us; that from the first moment of His Incarnation all these torments and insults had been present to Him, and from that first moment the cross was, so to say, planted in His Sacred Heart, which from the first, in order to show us His love, accepted all the humiliations, the poverty, the sorrows that His Sacred Humanity was to suffer throughout the whole course of His mortal life, and the outrages to which love was to expose Him in the most holy and august Sacrament upon our altars to the end of time.

"He then gave me to understand that the great desire He had to be perfectly loved by men had led Him to form the intention of manifesting to them His Heart, opening to them all the treasures of love, mercy, grace, holiness, and salvation that it contains, in order that all those who wished to pay it and obtain for it all the love and honour in their power might be enriched by the outpouring of those Divine treasures of which that Sacred Heart is the source. He assured me that He took a special pleasure in being honoured under the symbol of this Heart of flesh, the picture of which He wished to be exposed in public, in order, He added, by the sight of it to touch the unfeeling hearts of men. He promised me that His Heart would bestow in abundance on all those who honoured it the gifts of which it is full, and that wherever its picture was exposed to be specially

honoured, it would draw down upon the place blessings of every kind; moreover, that this devotion was, as it were, a last effort of His love, which was anxious to confer its favours on the Christians of these latter days, by setting before them an object and a method of devotion so well fitted to lovingly draw them to love Him, and to love Him deeply.

"After this my Divine Saviour spoke to me in words like these: 'This, My daughter, is the design for the accomplishment of which I have chosen you; for this it is that I have conferred such great favours upon you, and that from your cradle I have taken such special care of you. I have made Myself your teacher and director only to prepare you to receive all these great graces, amongst which you should count as one of the most remarkable this favour, by which I manifest and give to you the greatest of all treasures by, at one and the same time, showing and giving you My Heart.' On this I prostrated myself, with my face to the ground, and I found it impossible for me to express my feelings in any other way than by my silence, which was soon broken by my tears and sighs.

"From that time the favours of my Divine Master became more abundant. The result was that not being able to restrain the feelings of burning love which I experienced in me, I tried upon all occasions to impart them to others by my words, and this with the idea that others received the same favours as myself, and were in the same dispositions, but I was

dissuaded from this, both by the advice of Father de la Colombière and by the great opposition that I met with. At any rate, all the pleasure I gained in this, and the advantage I derived from these little excesses of zeal and fervour, was that they obtained for me some humiliations and a little trial which has lasted some years.

"The time that my Divine Saviour had destined for this work was not yet come. However, as He had promised, He Himself took care to prepare me for the favours He intended to bestow upon me; but this He did only by granting me favours still greater than those He had already conferred on me. The first of these was that after a general confession of the whole of my guilty life, immediately after absolution He showed me a robe of innocence, and with this He clothed me, saying, as it seems to me, words like these, 'My daughter, the faults thou wilt henceforth commit will humble thee very much, but will not force Me to withdraw Myself from thee.' Then opening to me for the second time His adorable Heart, 'This,' He added, 'is the place of thy eternal rest, where thou canst keep without stain the robe of innocence with which I have clothed thy soul.' Since that time I do not remember that I have ever left that adorable Heart. I am ever in it, but in a way and with feelings that it is not given me to express. All that I can say is that for the most part I am in it, as it were, in a burning furnace of pure love."

Practice adapted for pure souls who are raised to union with God.

These last words of the Venerable Margaret Mary which we have just read: "Opening to me His adorable Heart . . . This is the place of thy rest . . . I do not remember that I have ever left that adorable Heart," these words, I say, contain a practice of devotion to the Heart of Jesus that only the Holy Spirit could have taught, a practice, too, that is only adapted for highly favoured souls. They find in the Heart of Jesus an abode, a place of refuge, a sanctuary where they are secure against all the attacks of their enemies, and where they enjoy delightful peace and unspeakable happiness. This privilege is based on those words of the Scripture in which the Spouse of the Canticles says to His beloved, "Come, my dove, in the clifts of the rock, in the hollow places of the wall."* The Fathers and commentators agree in understanding these words of the Wounds of Jesus Christ. This mystic rock and wall is the Body of Jesus, the holes of the rock are the Wounds of His feet and hands, the hollow in the wall is the Wound of His side. In these sacred Wounds, then, it is that the Divine Spouse invites His beloved to hide and take her rest. This happens with these pure souls in a way that is truly spiritual, and hardly intelligible to mere human wisdom, but for all that it is very real, as we cannot doubt, judging from the experience of

* "Veni, columba mea, in foraminibus petræ, in cavernâ maceriæ" (Cant. ii. 13, 14).

holy souls. Now, as their experience can be of the greatest service to the design we have set before ourselves in this work, namely, to make known the privileges and the riches of the Heart of Jesus, and to show that God does really make use of this Divine Heart to pour out upon souls His choicest graces and favours, it will be well for the glory of this adorable Heart and for the consolation of souls who feel themselves drawn to this state, to show by testimony that is above suspicion, that what Mother Margaret Mary experienced was not a mere imagination, but a real favour, of a kind well known to the saints, and granted to many faithful souls. The following testimony is sufficient to persuade us of this.

SENTIMENTS OF VARIOUS SAINTS WITH REGARD TO THE HEART OF JESUS.

St. Bernard.

There have been few devotions established in the Church since the time of St. Bernard of which we do not find traces in the works of this great saint. It would seem that our Lord had inspired him with them by anticipation. It is from the writings of this holy Doctor, who has been most befittingly called the "Devout Doctor," that the Church usually takes all that is most touching and best adapted to the subject in the Offices of those special feasts which she has more recently established. We have instances of this in the Offices of the feasts of the

Name of Jesus, of the Name of Mary, of the Seven Dolours, of the Guardian Angels, of St. Joseph, and others of the same kind. The Heart of Jesus has not been forgotten by the holy Doctor. This is how he expresses his feelings with regard to this Divine Heart, and in relation to the practice of which we are here speaking:

"Since we have once come to the sweetest Heart of Jesus, and it is good for us to be here, let us not allow ourselves to be easily taken away from it. . . . The remembrance of this Divine Heart is a source of consolation and joy. . . . Oh, how good and how sweet it is *to dwell in this Heart!* . . . O sweet Jesus, what a rich treasure, what a precious pearl is your Heart! Willingly do I give all that I have to possess it. In this temple, in this sanctuary, before this Ark of the Covenant, I will adore and praise the name of the Lord, saying with David, 'I have found the Heart, the Heart of Jesus, my King, my Friend, my Brother, and with this Heart how can I but adore? This Heart—I dare say it—is mine; for if Jesus is my head, how can what belongs to my head not belong to me? Having found then your Heart and mine, O sweet Jesus, I beseech you, you who are my God, that you will just allow my prayers to be admitted into this Divine sanctuary in order that they may be heard. Draw me wholly *into this* Sacred Heart, and that I may make my abode therein all the days of my life, wash me from my iniquities, and cleanse me from every stain. O

fairest of the sons of men! Your sacred side was pierced only *to open for us a way into your Heart*, and this Heart itself was laid open only that we might be able *to dwell therein* in perfect freedom, secure from all that could disturb our rest . . . This adorable Heart was wounded in order that by this visible wound we might come to know of the invisible wound that love had made. Ah, how could Jesus show His ardent love more plainly than by willing that not only His Body, but moreover His very Heart should be pierced by the spear? . . . Who can help loving a Heart thus wounded? Who can remain insensible to its love?"

St. Bonaventure.

In the book which the Seraphic Doctor wrote under the title of *Stimulus Divini Amoris*, in the first chapter, when speaking of the wounds of Jesus Christ, he exclaims: "O sweet wounds! through you I have entered in and penetrated to the inmost depths of the charity of Jesus Christ. *There it is that I make my abode.* . . . There I find such an abundance of consolations that I cannot describe it. Oh, blindness of the sons of Adam, who know not how to enter into Jesus Christ by these sacred wounds! Lo! the happiness of the angels is open to us; the wall which enclosed it is pierced, and men do not care to enter in! Believe me, blind men that you are, if you only knew how to enter into Jesus by these sacred openings, you would find in Him not only wonderful sweetness

for your souls, but, moreover, delightful repose for your bodies. . . . But if even the body thus finds rest, what, think you, must be the sweetness that the mind tastes of in thus uniting itself through these wounds to the Heart of Jesus? I have no words to explain it, but try it yourselves, and you will find in it a store of every blessing. . . . See, the gate of Paradise is thrown open; the soldier's spear has turned aside the sword that barred the entrance; the treasure-house of eternal Wisdom and Love is opened to us. Enter in, then, through the openings of these sacred wounds. O happy spear that was worthy to make such an opening! Oh, had I been in the place of that spear, I would have wished never to come out of the side of Jesus, and I would have said: 'This is my rest for ever and ever; here will I dwell, for I have chosen it.'* Oh, faithful soul, see your amiable Spouse in His exceeding love has opened His side to you in order to be able to give you His Heart."

St. Francis of Sales.

This great Saint had a heart too like the Sacred Heart of Jesus not to largely partake of those feelings of tender and sublime devotion with which the Holy Spirit has inspired so many other saints towards this Sacred Heart. The following are some passages from his works which prove this. It will be seen that all the practices of which we have spoken were familiar to him.

* Psalm cxxxi. 14.

He speaks thus in the most sublime passage of all (Ep. lxiv. du iv. liv.): "I do not know where you will be this Lent according to the body, but according to the spirit I hope you will always be in the hole of the turtle-dove and *in the pierced side of our dear Saviour*. I hope to try to be often with you there. God in His sovereign goodness grant us both the grace! I saw you yesterday; it seems to me that seeing the side of our Lord open, you wished to take His Heart and put it in your own, like a king in a little kingdom; and though His is larger than yours, perhaps He would make it smaller to fit it in. How good our Lord is, my dear daughter, and how sweet is His Heart! Let us dwell *in this blessed abode*, and may His Heart always live in ours."

In another letter (liv. iv. ep. lxix.) he tells us that he made use of the Heart of Jesus to make his offerings pleasing to the Eternal Father. "Every day," he says, "in the Holy Mass I offer your heart to the Eternal Father with that of His Son, our Saviour. He cannot reject it, on account of this union in virtue of which I make the offering."

He speaks elsewhere (liv. iv. ep. ci.) of the adoration our hearts owe to the Heart of Jesus as their Sovereign King: "The other day in prayer contemplating the pierced side of our Lord, and seeing His Sacred Heart, it seemed to me that our hearts were all around it, and that they were doing it homage as the Sovereign King of all hearts. May it ever be our Heart! Amen."

In the Dedicatory Prayer which he places at the commencement of his Treatise on the Love of God, we see that in order to render his prayers more efficacious he used to pray through the Heart of Jesus; for he speaks thus to the Blessed Virgin: "Oh, my beloved Mother . . . I conjure you by the Heart of your sweet Jesus, which is the King of our hearts, and which ours adore, animate my soul and those of all who read this work with your all-powerful aid."

Writing to a nun on the feast of Corpus Christi (liv. vii. ep. xxxiii.), he teaches her another practice of devotion to the Sacred Heart: "Often salute," he says, "the Heart of our Divine Saviour, Who to show His love has deigned to conceal Himself under the appearances of bread, in order to live more familiarly and more closely with us and near to our hearts."

We find again (liv. vii. ep. lxi.) a remarkable passage showing his love for the Heart of Jesus: "Would to God, my dear sister and well-beloved daughter, that the same thing might happen to our hearts that happened to the blessed Saint whose feast we begin to keep this evening—St. Catherine of Siena. Oh, that our Saviour would take away our hearts and put His own in their place! But would He not rather make ours all His, purely and irrevocably His? Oh, may our sweet Jesus do this! I conjure Him to do so by His own Heart and by the love it contains, which is the love of loves. If He should not do it (but beyond doubt He will, because we ask Him), at least He would not be able to prevent us from coming and

taking His, for He still has His breast open for this; and if we had to tear open our own breasts to place His Heart therein instead of ours, would we not do it? May His holy Name be for ever blessed!"

TESTIMONY OF SOME OTHER SAINTS.

The pious author of the Manual attributed to St. Augustine speaks in the same way (cap. xxiii.). "Longinus," says he, "with his spear opened for me the side of Jesus Christ. I have entered in, and there I take my rest in security." Suarez, quoting these words, in treating of the wound of the side of Jesus, says that "our loving Saviour willed to receive a wound in that part of His Body, by which His Sacred Heart might be laid bare, in order that men might understand that the door was open for them to enter into that Divine Heart and rest therein."

St. Laurence Justinian had the same idea, for in one of his mystical writings he speaks thus of the wounds of Jesus Christ: "Look at these sacred members; see the wounds of the side, the hands, the feet of the Redeemer. They are open; do not fear to enter in by these openings; within you will find a vast space, inestimable delights, wonderful perfumes capable of strengthening every inward sense, and finally you will find perfect peace."

St. Thomas of Villanova says in the same spirit: "The mourning turtle-dove is the Church deprived

of the presence of her Spouse. In this state of widowhood her song is a continual wail. The nest of this chaste turtle-dove is the breast of her Beloved, into which she enters by the opening in His side, and therein she rests in security."

The Abbot Guerricius, too, uses the same expressions in reference to the passage we have quoted from the Canticles: "Blessed," he says, "be He Who, to enable me to enter into and take my rest in the clifts of the rock, allowed His side to be opened. Thus has He opened all His interior to me, that I may be able to enter into this wondrous tabernacle. . . . Oh, my brothers, how safe is this abode! It is an impregnable fortress against the attacks of our enemies. Enter, then, faithful soul, into this rock; hide yourself in this hollow of the ground; shut yourself up in His open side; for what is this sacred wound of the side of Jesus but the door that was in the side of the ark that was to give safety amid the waters of the Deluge? . . . Jesus has opened His side to us in order that through the opening the influence of His Divine Heart may diffuse itself over us. Hide yourself therein; there will you be in safety, there will you abound with delights."

But these tender affections with which the Holy Spirit has inspired the saints towards the Heart of Jesus, and the unspeakable delights that flow from that Divine source, have been felt and enjoyed by no one in such abundance and perfection as by some of the chosen spouses of Jesus Christ, to whom He has

taken pleasure in laying open the riches of His Heart. We shall here give some of the most remarkable testimonies to this.

St. Gertrude.

We see in the Life and Revelations of St. Gertrude that there have been few saints in the Church who have received from the Divine Spouse rarer, more wonderful, and more continual favours than this Saint. Jesus Christ inspired her with a marvellous love and affection for His Sacred Heart, and she tells us in her writings that from this sacred source she received an infinite number of gifts and spiritual delights. Here is one of the most remarkable passages. It is to be found in the twenty-third chapter of the Second Book, which was written by the Saint herself. There she enumerates the graces she had received from the infinite liberality of Jesus Christ, and gives Him thanks for them; and when she comes to the benefits she had derived from His Sacred Heart, she speaks thus: "To so many favours you have added an inestimable mark of your friendship and familiarity with me, by giving me in various ways your Sacred Heart, that glorious Ark of the Divinity, to be for me an overflowing fountain of every delight; now giving it to me as an entirely gratuitous gift, and now exchanging it for mine as a clearer sign of our mutual familiarity. It is by means of this Sacred Heart that you have manifested to me your most hidden secrets, and given me a share in your purest delights, and

often melted my soul with such loving caresses that, did I not know the infinite abyss of your mercy and the excess of your love, I would be surprised to know that even your Blessed Mother in Heaven was treated by you with such marks of tender love. . . . I give you back, then, O my Lord and my God, what is your own, and through this Divine Heart I offer you my adoration and the praise that is due to you."

In the third book we find two revelations which contain the very practice of which we are speaking. The first which is in these terms is to be found in chap. xxvi: "In the midst of this Divine sweetness Gertrude felt herself drawn in a wonderful way into the Heart of Jesus. To tell what she enjoyed, what she saw and heard and learned thus happily shut up within her Divine Spouse and Lord belongs only to herself, and to Him Who deigned to draw her to so excellent and so sublime a union with Himself." And (chap. xxviii.) it is related that our Lord presented His Heart to Gertrude and said to her: "Behold My Heart, I wish it to be thy Temple," and as He invited her to seek other places of refuge in His Sacred Body: "Ah! Lord," replied the Saint, "I find in your Heart, which you deign to call my temple, so sweet an abundance of all good that there is nothing left for me to wish for or to seek elsewhere, for outside of that amiable Heart I can taste of no repose."

We must not omit here another revelation which is to be found in the same book, chap. xxv. and which

will confirm what we have already said of the practice of making use of the Heart of Jesus to perfect our actions. It is there related that "one day when the Saint was praying and making great efforts to pray with attention, she had to suffer many distractions through human weakness. This cast her into great trouble of mind, and she said to herself: 'Alas! what fruit can be expected from such a prayer made with so much wandering of my thoughts?' Then Jesus Christ, to console her, showed her His deified Heart and said to her: 'Behold My Heart, the delight of the Most Blessed Trinity. I offer it to you that you may make use of it to supply for all your failings. Recommend to it with confidence all your actions, it will make them perfect in My sight. . . . My Heart shall be henceforth ever ready to aid you, and it will continually make amends for your negligences."

St. Mechtildis.

The learned and pious Canisius, speaking of St. Mechtildis, says "that she was a virgin enlightened by the Spirit of God, and soundly taught by means of revelations. That her wisdom and holiness caused her to be regarded during her life as an instrument chosen by God to teach and make known most wonderful things." Now this illustrious Saint had a special devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Mention is made of this Divine Heart in many of her revelations. We shall here give only one, which

bears upon the practice of which we are at present speaking. It is to be found in book i. chap. xxviii., and is in these words: "Our Lord replied to her (*i.e.*, Mechtildis): 'I give you My Heart as a pledge. . . . I give it to you as a place of refuge.' . . . This gift was one of the most excellent that God made to her. . . . Henceforth she began to be moved by a wonderful devotion to the Divine Heart of Jesus Christ; and almost every time that our Lord appeared to her, she received some special favour from His Sacred Heart as is to be seen in many passages in this book. She herself used to say in her simplicity: 'If I had to write down all the favours I have received from the most loving Heart of Jesus, I would make a book larger than the Breviary.'"

The Venerable Mother Clara Maria of the Passion (Vittoria Colonna, daughter of the Grand Constable Colonna), Foundress of the Carmelite Convent of Regina Cœli at Rome.

We may join to these testimonies of the saints that of this illustrious foundress, whose Life was printed at Rome in 1681. She will give us another proof that souls thus dwell in the Heart of Jesus, a testimony all the more reliable, because it is her own narrative given in writing to her director. It is to be found in her Life, book ii. chap. ix. She is giving an account of her interior state and speaks as follows: "I entered into a state of profound recollection, and I interiorly felt myself drawn into the wounds of our

Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time I was transported out of myself. . . . My soul was drawn forcibly and sweetly into the sacred side of Jesus Christ and even into His Heart. . . . I felt that this Divine Heart was full of love, but a love so pure that I have not words to express it. I saw my soul, as it were, plunged in this Heart . . . and feeling myself thus in the Heart of Jesus Christ, I understood clearly, fully, and with inexplicable joy the eminent excellence of the place, that is to say, of the breast and Heart of Jesus. . . . It seems that the soul goes on sinking deeper and deeper in the profound knowledge thus given to it of the purity and sublimity of this excellent place of rest."

CHAPTER IV.

ON DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF MARY.

ONCE the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was established in the Church, it was in the order of Providence a natural consequence that a Devotion to the Heart of Mary should also be established. In order to show how conformable to the Divine counsels this consequence is, we must look at the matter in its origin, which comes on the one hand from the inseparable union which the Divine Wisdom has established between Jesus and Mary, and on the other, from the immense love of Jesus for His Mother which has led her adorable Son to share with her all His possessions and all His honours. Let us begin this chapter with this consideration, which is so glorious for Mary and so sweet for those who love her. When we have developed it, this consequence will be seen to follow clearly from it: that the devotion to the Heart of Mary really is a natural result of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ.

Let us consider, in the first place, that the Eternal Wisdom, in consequence of the choice it had made of Mary to be the Mother of Jesus, has established

a very close and uninterrupted union between the Son and the Mother. We will then consider how the Son has raised His Mother to a likeness with Himself and given her a share in all the goods and honours that belong to Him. To explain this we shall have to go into some details, but let us not fear to deal at some length with a subject so worthy of the attention and admiration of angels and men.

And to begin with the union established by the Eternal Wisdom between Jesus and Mary. We see this union in eternity, we see it in all times, at all places, and in every position in which we can consider the Son and the Mother.

First let us carry our thoughts beyond time, and we shall see Mary united to Jesus before all ages in the eternal decrees of Providence. The first object which the Divine Wisdom proposed to itself in its works was Jesus Christ and with Him Mary His Mother. It is for this reason that the Church applies to Mary what is said of the Son of God, the Eternal Wisdom, and says that she came forth the first-born of all creatures,* that she was conceived before the depths were made,† that God possessed her in the beginning of His ways,‡ that she was ordained from

* "Prodivi primogenita ante omnem creaturam" (Ecclus. xxiv. 5).

† "Nondum erant abyssi et ego jam concepta eram" (Prov. viii. 24).

‡ "Dominus possedit me in initio viarum suarum" (Prov. viii. 22).

eternity,* that when He prepared the Heavens she was with Him,† that her influence was felt in all the works of the Creation (as a final cause, because all was done on account of her and her Son).‡

One might well wonder that the Church, the mistress of truth and always directed by the Holy Spirit, so often applies to Mary in the Divine Office, those expressions of the Wise Man which, strictly speaking, refer to the Eternal Word, and that to draw the picture of the Mother, she thus solemnly makes use of the same colours that the Holy Spirit has used to depict the Son. But our wonder ceases and the mystery is made clear when we reflect upon the union of which we are speaking, for in the designs of Providence all that was done for the Son had reference also to His Blessed Mother, and all that was to be the effect of the merits of the Son, with regard to the rest of men, was to be also in a certain sense the effect of the merits of the Mother inseparably united to those of the Son, God having resolved in the decrees of His infinite wisdom that both should concur together in the great work of the salvation of the world, each in a way proportioned to their respective natures. A man and a woman had ruined the human race, the Eternal Wisdom decreed that a man and a woman should save it. This then is what the Holy Spirit and the Church, the faithful interpreter

* "Ab æterno ordinata sum" (Prov. viii. 23).
† "Quando præparabat cœlos, aderam" (Prov. viii. 27).
‡ "Cum eo eram cuncta componens" (Prov. viii. 30).

of His oracles, would have us understand from the application that she makes to Mary of the expressions of which we have been speaking: it is this wonderful union between Jesus and Mary, whether it be with regard to the works of Creation or of Redemption, attributing jointly to the Mother and to the Son—always remembering what is the relation between them—a universal dominion over all creatures and a common influence in what regards grace and salvation. This dominion and influence are indicated in a hundred other passages in the Scriptures which are also applied to Mary by the Church: "With me are riches, glory, great wealth;* that I may enrich those who love me, and fill their treasuries;† blessed is the man that heareth me, and that watcheth daily at my gates;‡ he that shall find me, shall find life and have salvation;§ in me is all hope of life and of virtue."‖ All this was said of Jesus Christ, all this strictly speaking belongs to Jesus Christ, but at the same time all this is said of Mary and is justly applied to Mary by the Church, on account of this wonderful union of which we are speaking.

Now, if leaving the eternal connection of Mary with

* "Mecum sunt divitiæ et gloria, opes superbæ" (Prov. viii. 18).

† "Ut ditem diligentes me, et thesauros eorum repleam" (Prov. viii. 21).

‡ "Beatus qui audit me, et qui vigilat ad fores meas quotidie" (Prov. viii. 34).

§ "Qui me invenerit, inveniet vitam, et hauriet salutem a Domino" (Prov. viii. 35).

‖ "In me omnis spes vitæ et virtutis" (Ecclus. xxiv. 25).

her Son we come to their temporal union, and contemplate Mary since the creation of the world, we shall see her inseparably united to her Son from the beginning and through all the succeeding ages. The first promise that God made to our first parents in the earthly Paradise was the promise of Jesus Who was to repair their fall, and Mary was clearly included in that same promise: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman; she shall crush thy head." Go through the other promises made to the patriarchs, the oracles of the prophets, the types and figures of which the Old Testament is full, and everywhere we see Mary promised, foretold, prefigured, together with her Son. The first figure of Jesus Christ was Adam, and the first figure of Mary was Eve; all the illustrious men of the Old Law were figures of Jesus Christ, and all the illustrious women were figures of Mary; a thousand mysterious types prefigured Jesus Christ, and a thousand types prefigured Mary, as all the Fathers and commentators have remarked.

But let us consider this union between Jesus and Mary beyond the region of types and shadows, in the reality, in the New Law after the coming of Jesus Christ. Here it is that it shines forth in the most beautiful way. In the mysteries of the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, we see Mary united as closely as possible to her Son. In the Incarnation the Eternal Word dwelling for nine months in the womb of Mary is in a certain sense one with her. Thence, in His infancy, He passes into her embrace,

reposing on her virginal bosom, clinging to her breasts, fed with her milk, the substance of the Mother becoming the substance of the Son. Then until the age of thirty years He lives with His Mother, alone with her, in the same house, at the same table; having the same possessions, the same earthly lot, the same occupations, the same inclinations, the same feelings. Can we imagine a closer or more constant union? The Holy Spirit has been pleased to point out this union in the Gospel; and it is not without reason, nor by a mere chance, that the Evangelists take notice of it throughout. We are told that the shepherds found *Jesus with Mary*, and the same is said of the Magi.* At the Presentation of the Infant Jesus in the Temple, Mary is united with her Son in all that occurs. In the flight into Egypt, the order given to Joseph refers to both Jesus and Mary.† During the Hidden Life of Jesus, Mary was always with Him; she accompanied Him in His Public Life. She was with Him at Cana in Galilee;‡ she went down with Him to Capharnaum.§ His first miracle having reference to the soul and spiritual things was worked by means of Mary in the person of St. John Baptist; and the first miracle having reference to the body and temporal things was performed at Mary's intercession at the marriage at Cana. We learn from

* "Invenerunt puerum cum Maria" (St. Matt. ii. 11; St. Luke ii. 22, 35).

† "Accipe puerum et matrem" (St. Matt. ii. 13).

‡ "Erat mater Jesu ibi" (St. John ii. 1).

§ "Descendit ipse et mater ejus" (St. John ii. 12).

various parts of the sacred text that she sometimes followed her Son in His apostolic journeys. She was at Jerusalem with Him at the time of the Passion; she was thus His inseparable companion throughout His life; she was with Him in every position, she shared in all His toils, all His sorrows, all His shame, all His joys. But as the mystery of the Cross was the great mystery of Redemption, and the consummation of all the rest, God, for the accomplishment of His designs, decreed that the union of which we are speaking should be manifested with special clearness in that mystery. See Mary at the foot of the Cross of her Son, suffering with Him in His unmeasured sorrows, and suffering in the same spirit as He did, in union with Him and for the same end. For while Jesus by His sufferings and death became the Redeemer and Father of the faithful, whom He spiritually begot to the true life of grace, Mary by her sorrows, united to those of her Son became their Mediatrix and Mother.

From this perpetual union of Mary with Jesus, let us pass on to that likeness which exists between them through Jesus having imparted to Mary what belonged to Him, adorning her with all His beauties, enriching her with all His treasures, pouring out upon her all He possessed, in a word, making her His most perfect image among created things. Let us survey in detail this marvellous likeness, and our hearts will be delighted with it. I speak, of course, to educated readers, who know in what sense it is that one can

and ought compare Mary with Jesus, and what an infinite difference there is, nevertheless, between the Son and the Mother. The Son is God, the Mother is a mere creature; the Son has of Himself all that He has; He is rich and powerful by His own nature; Mary of herself has nothing, she receives everything, she is rich only in the possessions of her Son. The Son acts by His own power, and all is due to His own merits; Mary has neither power nor merit but through the power and merits of her Son. Having made this remark, let us return to the wonderful likeness which it has pleased Jesus to establish between Himself and His Blessed Mother, a likeness in perfections, virtues, graces, titles, qualities, privileges, riches, power, and glory, and finally, in the honours the Church pays to the Son and to the Mother. Ah! to a heart that loves this incomparable Queen, how delightful is this conformity which presents itself to our sight between Jesus and Mary! Let us not refuse to taste its sweetness for a little while.

A likeness in perfections—see, on the one hand, Jesus possessing in an excellent degree all the perfections of goodness, wisdom, power, and mercy; and on the other, consider Mary, adorned by her Son with these same perfections in an ineffably infinite degree above the perfections of angels and of men. Jesus is goodness by essence, that is to say, that in Him are united all the uncreated perfections of God; and He willed that Mary should partake in this goodness by uniting in her with God-like liberality all created per-

fections, and this raises Mary so far above all other creatures that she surpasses them as much by her goodness as by her dignity of Mother of God; that is to say, that the goodness of every other creature is as nothing in comparison with her. Jesus is Wisdom itself, and He has filled Mary with His wisdom to such a degree, that the Church can truly call her the seat and throne of wisdom. Jesus is the Father of Mercies, and Mary is worthily called the Mother of Mercy; the power of Jesus is infinite, that of Mary may be said to be the same as that of her Son, for He has made His Mother in some sense all powerful by making her the Mistress and distributor of His graces and treasures.

A likeness in the purest, the most perfect, the most heroic, the most winning virtues—humility, patience, meekness, obedience, charity, love, and zeal. Contemplate on the one hand Jesus, in Himself the humblest, the meekest, the most patient, the most loving, the holiest of men; and on the other Mary, whom He has made the most humble, the purest, the meekest, the most patient, the holiest of all women, and of all creatures; and so with the other virtues.

A likeness in their titles and offices. Consider and admire the exact correspondence between the offices and titles the Church assigns to Mary and those that belong to her Son. Jesus our King, Mary our Queen; Jesus our Master, Mary our Mistress; Jesus our Lord, Mary our Lady; Jesus our Father, Mary our Mother; Jesus our Advocate and Mediator, Mary our Advo-

cate and Mediatrix; Jesus, our hope, our help, our refuge, our consolation, our life; Mary, the hope, the help, the consolation, the refuge, the life of Christians; Jesus, the Way that leads to Heaven; Mary, the Gate of Heaven; Jesus, our Guide and our Light in this life; Mary, the star that directs and leads us to the haven of salvation; Jesus, the Author of Grace; Mary, the Mother of Grace; Jesus, compared to the sun on account of the abundance of living light of which He is Himself the source, and which He makes to shine upon all men; Mary, compared to the moon on account of the sweetness of her light, and of the influence she exercises upon the whole Church.

A likeness in their privileges. Jesus, impeccable by nature; Mary, impeccable by grace; Jesus, exempt through His Divine personality from all sin, original or actual; Mary exempt from all sin, original or actual, by a special privilege granted to her alone; Jesus, a Virgin; Mary, a Virgin; Jesus, incorruptible in the tomb; Mary also incorruptible; Jesus, rising again the third day; Mary, leaving the tomb at the same period; Jesus going up to Heaven with Body and Soul; Mary going up after Him in the same state; Jesus seated at the right hand of the Father; Mary seated at the right hand of the Son.

A likeness in riches, in power, in glory. Jesus, the Master of all things, the King of the universe, the Lord of Heaven and earth; Mary, the Mistress of the world, the Queen of angels and men, the distributor of all graces. All power has been given to

the Son by the Father;* and all power has been given to the Mother by the Son. Every knee bends to the Son in Heaven, on earth, and in Hell;† and all bend the knee to Mary—be they angels, men, or demons.

Finally, there is a likeness in the honours the Church pays to Jesus and to Mary. This is our last consideration, and it is most closely connected with the consequence we wish to deduce.

The same love that has led Jesus Christ to associate His Mother with Himself in all the glory He enjoys in the Church Triumphant, has led Him to associate her in the same way in all the honour He receives from the Church Militant. Traverse in spirit the whole world, and see, with those tender feelings of love and admiration that it should arouse in a faithful heart, how Jesus and Mary are everywhere honoured together. What nation is there to which the name of Jesus has been announced, to which the name of Mary has not been preached at the same time with that of her Son? What people has confessed and adored Jesus Christ as God, without in the same instant confessing and honouring Mary as the Mother of God? What temple is there throughout the world erected to the glory of Jesus Christ in which you will not find something specially dedicated to the honour of Mary? Read the history of the Church in every Catholic State, and you will see that Mary has ever been, together with her Son,

* St. Matt. xxviii. 18. † Philipp. ii. 10.

the first and most tender object of the love and veneration of the faithful, and that the same spirit of faith and grace that inspires love for Jesus, always has inspired as lively a love for Mary.

But to thoroughly convince ourselves of this consoling truth, we have only to consider the conduct of the Church, which is the certain guide of our judgment. See then what care the Church takes that the faithful shall not separate Mary from Jesus in their acts of veneration, prayer, praise, confidence, and love. She is herself the first to give an example of this by inseparably uniting Mary with her Son in her prayers and her most solemn rites. She continually uses the name and the intercession of Mary with her Son.

Open the sacred books used for the Sacrifice of our altars. What page will you come upon in which Mary is not mentioned?

Open the rituals and pontificals which are used in the most sacred functions—blessings, consecrations, the administration of the sacraments, and the like—and everywhere we find the name of Mary, the invocation of Mary, the intercession of Mary employed by the Church. It would seem that just as the Eternal Father has willed that the Church should ask nothing of Him except through the merits of His Son, the Son has willed that in all our needs our prayers should be offered to Him by the hands of His Mother.

In the Divine Office every day and every hour

the prayers and praises that refer to Mary are united and mingled with the praises that refer to Jesus. After the Lord's Prayer every Office begins with the invocation of Mary, and they all end with those anthems which contain all that is most glorious and most affectionate in her praise. Not content with this, the Church has dedicated a special Office to the honour of Mary, and her priests add it to the Divine Office.

She approves of her preachers interrupting their discourses on the word of God to invoke Mary, in order that the Divine word may produce more effect. Thrice a day by the sound of her church bells she invites the faithful to invoke Mary. Each week she devotes a day to her honour, besides the large number of feasts she celebrates in her praise throughout the year.

See, too, what care the Church takes to inspire all the faithful, from the youngest to the oldest, with this same spirit. No sooner are children able to speak than they are taught the name of Jesus, and at the same time they learn to pronounce the name of Mary, and never to separate these two names. No sooner are they able to pray, than, as we teach them to say the *Pater Noster* addressed to the Eternal Father, we teach them also to say the *Ave Maria* addressed to Mary. No sooner are they old enough to receive instruction, than after having taught them to know and adore Jesus Christ as their God, their King, and their Father, we teach them to honour Mary as the Mother of their God, as their Queen, their Mistress,

and their loving Mother, to whom in all their needs they are to have recourse as her children. They are taught to invoke her morning and evening, at home, in church, during Mass, and when they go to confession and Communion, for in every prayer we say to sanctify our actions, we take Mary as our advocate in all things with her Son. This spirit, imbibed from infancy, is the same in every age and in every land. Devotion to Mary is the devotion of all nations. Nearly all the prayers that are generally used by the great mass of the faithful are directed to Mary, such as the Rosary, her Little Office, hymns, anthems, and prayers of various kinds. The prayer-books in the hands of Catholics are all but full of her praises.

But let us go on to a more glorious way in which Mary is honoured, a way that is indeed included in what we have just said, but which deserves to be more fully explained. Our confidence and our love form the principal part of the honour due to Jesus Christ, and of these He is most jealous. Now Jesus Christ has been pleased to share this honour also with His Blessed Mother, if I may so express myself, and He has done this in a way to which we cannot pay too much attention. There is, in fact, nothing in the Church to be compared with the confidence and love of all peoples for Mary—nothing so universal, so ardent, so tender, and this in all ages, in all classes, among men and women, great and little, the just and sinners, kings and subjects, priests and laymen, religious and seculars, everywhere there is the same

ardour. Each one of the faithful, without distinction of sex, of age, or of condition, is in some way devoted to Mary, and regards it as a duty to have some token of devotion and zeal for her. Her scapular, rosary, or chaplet, her statue or medal, what child of the Church is there without some such sign that he is the servant of the Blessed Virgin? What priest and pastor does not hold it to be his duty to exhort his flock to put themselves under the protection of Mary? What religious order of men or women does not regard Mary as its Mother and Foundress? How many kings have consecrated to her their states, themselves, and their families? To whom but Mary do we have recourse in all kinds of spiritual and temporal wants? To whom do sinners turn to obtain the pardon of their sins but to Mary? She is their refuge—*Refugium peccatorum.* To whom do the afflicted look in their sorrows but to Mary? She is their comfort—*Consolatrix afflictorum.* To whom do all Christians have recourse in all their needs but to Mary? She is their help—*Auxilium Christianorum.* In perils by land and sea whom do we invoke with more affection than Mary? To whom but to Mary do we have recourse in public calamities in order to turn away the scourges of Divine justice? How many kingdoms, provinces, and cities are on such occasions solemnly devoted and consecrated to Mary?

And while we are on this subject, we would point out that Jesus Christ acts in regard to His Mother in a way that is well worthy of our attention. For there

is not a title calculated to excite our confidence in her in every kind of necessity that He has not secured for her in the various places in which she is honoured, to show to the whole world by this means the universal power He has given her of succouring us in all our needs. Thus in one place Mary is honoured under the title of Our Lady of Consolation. This is for those who are in sorrow and tears. In another place she is honoured under the title of Our Lady of Mercy, and this is for so many poor creatures who are overwhelmed with miseries of body and of soul. Here she is invoked against despair under the name of Our Lady of Hope; there against temptations and sin under the title of Our Lady of Grace; and again as Our Lady of Refuge, against the persecutions of our visible and invisible enemies; as our Lady of Peace, against discord and divisions; as Our Lady of Light, against the darkness of ignorance and error; as Our Lady of Good Help when we are abandoned by creatures; as Our Lady of Healing, for spiritual and corporal maladies; as Our Lady of the Agonizing, for a happy death; as Our Lady the Liberatrix, for freedom from the captivity of sin and the tyranny of men; as Our Lady of Victories for Christian armies; and so with the other titles given to Mary which each can recall in his own mind, and draw therefrom the sweetest consolation. There are titles of every kind, which will bring home to us better than long discourses the idea that prevails in the Church of the boundless power granted by Jesus to Mary,

and make us feel that it is to her and to her intercession we must look for the good gifts suggested by all the sweet names that are given to her.

Our confidence in this powerful Queen is so deeply rooted in every heart, that even in accidents which are so sudden as to give no time for reason to act, and in pressing and unexpected wants, in which by an instinctive action of our very nature we are wont to call upon God, we have recourse to Mary also, and appeal to her for aid.

In the Church love for our sweet Mother goes hand in hand with the confidence of which we have just spoken, and on these points we need not say much. We need only point out how great is the zeal of the people for all that regards her honour. What feasts are celebrated by such devout and fervent multitudes as those of Mary? What churches are more crowded than those that are dedicated to her? What confraternities more numerous and more widespread than hers? What is heard with more pleasure in the pulpit than the praise of Mary? What sanctuaries are more celebrated for the concourse of pilgrims and devout people than those which are consecrated to her, and scattered through every part of the Christian world? What object of devotion is more common than the image of Mary, not only in churches, where it is on almost every altar, but also in private houses, in public places, by the roadside, at the gates of cities, and the entrances of public buildings. Everywhere the image of Mary with her Son in her arms

is presented to the eyes of the faithful as that of the object of their tenderest affections. After that of Jesus, what name is there that the faithful have on their lips like the name of Mary, in life and in death, in adversity and prosperity, in every danger and temptation? That holy name is like a precious balm for the soothing of every ill. It is a defence against temptation, it is a formidable weapon against the enemies of our salvation.

Let us now make this reflection: Jesus Christ sees throughout the Church this tender and ardent love for Mary. He sees this general, this widespread, this unfailing confidence in her, and far from blaming it, not only does He permit, but it is He Himself that inspires it, and that day by day enlivens and strengthens it more and more by the spiritual and temporal favours He is continually granting to those who have recourse to His Blessed Mother. He has filled the world with *miracles* wrought by her intercession, this is His testimony; it is thus He speaks, and thus He only can speak, and thus has He spoken in every part of the world in favour of His Mother. Traverse the ages since the birth of Christianity, traverse every place, every kingdom, province, and city where there are or ever have been Christians, and what land will you find, be it ever so remote or savage, that has not been marked by some blessing or some miracle obtained by the invocation of Mary? Is there a land in which there is not some church dedicated to our Lady, and famous for miracles and

prodigies wrought there in favour of those who have invoked her name? How often have men seen the sick healed, the possessed delivered, the dead raised to life, tempests calmed, shipwreck avoided, fires extinguished, pestilence stayed, victories gained, wars brought to an end, misfortunes and calamities averted, the scourges of Divine Justice held back, sinners converted, and spiritual favours obtained by the intercession of Mary! The pictures and other offerings with which the gratitude of her people has filled her sanctuaries are faithful witnesses to the wonderful effects of her all-powerful protection. For seventeen centuries* Jesus Christ has not ceased to work miracles in every country in the world in favour of those who invoke His Mother, in order by so efficacious a means to convince all of the pleasure He takes in seeing her honoured and to win for her the love and confidence of the nations. He has done something more which is of deep interest to us, and even better calculated to excite our confidence. He has made devotion to Mary, love for and confidence in her a most certain mark of predestination. He seems even to have bound up with the precious gift of faith, or, more strictly speaking, he has inseparably connected devotion to His Mother with the gift of faith. For it everywhere holds true that where devotion to Mary is kept up, the faith is maintained; and wherever faith dies, devotion to Mary dies with it.

* Written in 1732.

It remains for us to touch upon a last point in this wonderful union between Jesus and Mary, and this is to be found in the honours they both receive from the Church, chiefly by means of the feasts that are dedicated to them. We shall end with this point which will lead us directly to the conclusion which we have in view.

Let us note then that there is not a feast instituted by the Church in honour of Jesus without a corresponding feast instituted in honour of Mary. It is easy to test this. Remark, in the first place, that just as the Church solemnizes by special feasts all the mysteries of the life of the Son from His Incarnation to His Ascension, she solemnizes in the same way all the mysteries of His Mother's life from her Conception to her Assumption.

Remark, in the second place, that we do not see any new feast, devotion, or practice, instituted to the glory of Jesus Christ, without the same Spirit that taught it to the Church immediately inspiring her to institute another to the glory of Mary exactly corresponding with it. Examples of this are quite common: the feast of the Name of Jesus, of the Name of Mary, of the Wounds of Jesus, of the Dolours of Mary, and so with others. We may say that this is the constant and invariable order of the Providence of Jesus Christ in His Church. From this we easily arrive at the conclusion we have set before us in this chapter. Therefore devotion to the Heart of Mary is a natural result of devotion to the Heart of Jesus;

and once devotion to the Heart of Jesus was established in the Church, devotion to the Heart of Mary could not fail to be established also. This is the result we anticipated at the outset, and which will be seen to follow most clearly from the preceding remarks.

We have too the consolation of seeing this already happily realized. The feast of the Heart of Mary is already established in many places as well as that of the Heart of Jesus, and it is very remarkable that our Lord so overruled events from the outset that the first church dedicated to the Heart of Jesus (that of the Seminary of Coutances in Normandy) was at the same time jointly dedicated to the Heart of Mary. In 1688 a solemn feast with an octave was celebrated in that Seminary in honour of the Sacred Hearts, and even before that time a confraternity was established there under the title of the Confraternity of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. On October 4, 1674, in the fifth year of his Pontificate, Pope Clement X. honoured it with a Brief of Indulgences.

Clement IX. had already granted, on April 8, 1668, a similar favour in honour of the Heart of Mary to the royal Abbey of Saint-Césaire at Arles, where the feast is celebrated each year on the third Sunday after Pentecost.

In 1654 the House of Refuge at Dijon was dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Mary.

At Paris the Abbey of Montmartre and the Convent of the Nuns of the Blessed Sacrament have the right

of celebrating the feast of the Heart of Mary, with its Office and all the solemnities of the greatest feasts, by authority of their lordships the Archbishops and of a Legate *à latere* of the Holy See.

The Order of St. Benedict, which, as we have elsewhere remarked, has for years celebrated the Office of the Heart of Jesus, has together with it celebrated the Office of the Heart of Mary as a double of the second class. Both are to be found in the Appendix to the Benedictine Breviary printed at Paris.

In 1668 the Friars Minors of the great province of France obtained permission from the Papal Legate to celebrate the Office of the Heart of Mary, as may be seen in their Proper Offices.

Finally, in 1648 and the following years, we find the approbation of sixteen French prelates, archbishops, and bishops, authorizing the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Mary.

But it must be admitted that since the establishment of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus the progress of the devotion to the Heart of Mary has been more considerable, for it has spread with that to the Heart of Jesus into most of the countries of the Christian world, as may easily be seen in the published catalogue of confraternities dedicated to it.

If we are now asked for the reasons by which we prove the solidity, utility, holiness, and sweetness of devotion to the Heart of Mary, we have no others to bring forward but those we have made use of when speaking of the Heart of Jesus. For we may make

the same reflections on the Heart of Mary that we have already made with regard to that of Jesus, since there has never been a heart so like to that of Jesus, and after the Heart of Jesus there never has been one so worthy of our admiration, our veneration, and our love, as the Heart of Mary. We may then, with proper reservations, apply to this Sacred Heart all that we have said of the excellence of the Heart of Jesus in the first chapter of the second part.

In fact, we may consider the Heart of Mary in two ways, as we have considered the Heart of Jesus: either in itself and with reference to its own excellence, or in regard to men.

If we consider it in itself, its excellence is derived:

I. From the fact that this Sacred Heart is what is noblest in the body of the Mother of God, the holiest body in the world, which by partaking in the dignity of her person possesses an all but infinite dignity.

II. From the fact that it is the principle of the life of the Mother of a God; that is to say, of the noblest, the most beautiful, the most heavenly of all lives after that of the Man-God.

III. From its being the source of the blood of which was formed the Body of Jesus Christ, and which was united to the Divinity.

IV. From its being the noblest organ of the greatest and holiest soul that ever was, in the most admirable of its sensible operations, such as those of its will.

V. From its being the chief instrument of the glory

God receives from the sensible affections of the Blessed Virgin, and especially of her love, one single act of which is more pleasing to God than the love of all other creatures.

VI. From its being the special sanctuary of the Holy Spirit, sanctified in an extraordinary manner by His operations and by the infusion of His most excellent gifts and graces.

On all these grounds it is evident that after the Heart of Jesus there is nothing among corporeal things either in Heaven or on earth that can be compared in excellence with the Heart of Mary—nothing holier, nothing more precious, nothing nobler, nothing greater, nothing sweeter, nothing more pleasing to God.

And if we now go on to consider this admirable Heart in relation to men, to whom it is presented as an object of devotion, where shall we find anything sweeter or more tenderly touching than this virginal Heart? For it is the Heart of our heavenly mistress, our good Mother, our advocate, our consolation, our refuge; the source and seat of the charity, compassion, mercy, and tender love of the Blessed Virgin for us; the centre of those unmeasured sorrows that our Blessed Mother suffered on the occasion of our redemption; finally, the model according to which we should form our hearts, the model of humility, purity, meekness, charity, love, and all other virtues.

If these motives do not make this Sacred Heart worthy of the love and most tender devotion of all

men, it must be because they do not think of them, or because they have the hardest of hearts.

We shall end this subject with the word of one of the most celebrated missionaries of Normandy, Père Jean Eudes, an eminent client of the Sacred Heart of Mary. This holy man in a work on the excellence of this Sacred Heart, which he printed at Coutances in 1688, thus concludes an instruction upon it: "When, therefore, we honour the Sacred Heart of the Mother of God we honour the Heart that, of all hearts, after the Heart of her Son, is the most worthy of our admiration, the most perfect, the most beloved by God, the most adorned with every kind of virtue, the most full of grace and love; the Heart that has the most tenderness for poor sinners, that is the meekest, the most compassionate, the most merciful, the most charitable, the most beneficent, the most amiable; in a word, the object that after Jesus has the greatest charms for heaven and earth. It is therefore for the best reasons that we should make this Sacred Heart the object of our tenderest devotion, and pay it all the honour and respect that its own excellence, and the favours we have received from it, demand of our gratitude and love."

If such great respect is shown to the veil of the Blessed Virgin at the Basilica of Santa Croce in Rome; to some of her hair at Santa Maria Maggiore; to her tunic at Nôtre Dame de Chartres; and to some of the milk of her breasts at Rheims, what are we to think of her Sacred Heart?

All the feasts which were celebrated under the Old, and are celebrated under the New Law, were instituted in honour of some favour received from God.

What a feast then should we celebrate in honour of the Sacred Heart of our Lady, whence come all the favours Jesus Christ has done or ever will do to men?

If the Church celebrates a feast in honour of St. Peter's Chains; if she celebrates the feasts of single actions of certain saints, as for instance the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, and that of St. John before the Latin Gate, how much more reason is there for celebrating the feast of the Sacred Heart of our Lady, which has been the source of an infinite number of the most sublime and heroic actions; of a Heart which was pierced with the sword of sorrow; which was the tabernacle of the Holy of Holies; and which, by the gift it made to men of a Saviour, in consenting to the mystery of the Incarnation, has become the principle of holiness in Heaven and on earth?

We must not be surprised then that this devotion has been so readily embraced by persons of great piety, and especially by two of the greatest, most pious, and most virtuous Queens of France, Anne of Austria, the worthy mother of our King (Louis XV.) and Maria Theresa of Austria, his devoted wife. So long as they lived, when they were in Paris, they did not fail to go every year to the church of the Nuns of

the Blessed Sacrament to assist with these holy women at their accustomed solemn celebration of the feast of the Sacred Heart of Mary. This feast is moreover authorized by several of the Sovereign Pontiffs and by many Cardinals, especially by the Cardinal de Vendôme, the Legate *à latere*, and by many of the Archbishops and Bishops of France to the number of upwards of thirty, amongst others by Mgr. François de Harlay, Archbishop of Paris. All these Arch-Bishops and Bishops have authorized the celebration of the feast with its office in their dioceses.

Finally, we may confirm what we have already said of the Heart of Mary, by Divine revelations and by the example of the saints. In the Revelations of St. Mechtildis, of which we have spoken above, we read (lib. i. cap. lxv.) that it was granted to that Saint to honour and salute the Heart of the Blessed Virgin for seven special reasons :

I. On account of the ardent desires it conceived for the coming of Jesus Christ.

II. On account of the love with which it burns, and of its deep humility.

III. On account of its tender love of the Infant Jesus.

IV. For the care with which it treasured up the words of Jesus Christ.

V. For its sufferings in the Passion of Jesus Christ.

VI. On account of the prayers it offered up and the desires it formed for the Church.

VII. On account of the care it takes in Heaven to make the Holy Trinity propitious to us.

In the Revelations of St. Gertrude (lib. iv. cap. iii.) we find the following with regard to the Heart of Mary. In a vision recorded in the passage to which we have referred we are told that the Infant Jesus appeared to the Saint full of sweetness and beauty, and, as it were, drinking with the most delightful relish from the Heart of Mary, "by which He gave her to understand that as His Humanity was fed with His Mother's virginal milk, so His Divinity took its repose and delight in her most sweet and most pure Heart."

In the same book (cap. xxi.) it is related "that while the *Ave Maria* was being chanted in the Divine Office, the Saint had this vision: It seemed to her that she saw three rays of light coming from the Most Holy Trinity, one from the Father, one from the Son, and one from the Holy Ghost, which entered into the Heart of the Blessed Virgin, and issuing from it again returned with great impetuosity to the source from which they had come. The first ray, which came from the Eternal Father, signified the power He communicated to Mary; the second, which came from the Son, signified the wisdom with which this her adorable Son adorned her; the third ray signified the bountiful gifts which the Holy Spirit had freely bestowed upon her."

We have already seen that it was the practice of Mother Mary of the Incarnation, the Ursuline, not

to separate the Heart of Mary from that of Jesus in her devotional exercises, but that she made use of the intercession of the Heart of Mary with Jesus Christ, at the same time that she made use of that of the Heart of Jesus with the Eternal Father.

The Blessed Hermann, of the Order of St. Dominic, used to honour the Heart of Mary every day, as is recorded in his Life.

The Venerable Margaret Mary of the Visitation, whom we have so often mentioned, used also to combine devotion to the Heart of Mary with devotion to the Heart of Jesus. Probably it was from her that Père de la Colombière learned the practice, for he too combined these two Hearts in His devotions, as appears from a very devout aspiration which is to be found in the Diary of his Retreats.*

Led by these examples and convinced by so many reasons, let us not in our devotions separate the Heart of Mary from the Heart of Jesus. Let us honour and love them both from the bottom of our hearts. Let us devote and consecrate ourselves entirely to these sweet and most sacred Hearts. Let us approach the Eternal Father through the Heart of Jesus, let us approach Jesus through the Heart of Mary. Through the Heart of Jesus let us pay to the Eternal Father what we owe His majesty, His justice, and His infinite mercy; and through the Heart of Mary let us discharge what we owe to the

* See vol. vii. p. 46 of his works.

Son, in consideration of His greatness, His clemency, His bountiful goodness, His favours, and His love. We shall obtain all from the Father through the Heart of the Son; and we shall obtain all from the Son through the Heart of His Mother.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE FEASTS OF THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY.

THOSE who have hitherto debated whether the Church should or should not approve of the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, will, with the help of God, find in the following remarks wherewith to solve their doubts.

I. What we have said in the first and second parts of this work as to the nature and excellence of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, must apply, without any reservation, to the feast that belongs to that adorable Heart; and as it follows from what we have said of the devotion that it is one of the most excellent in the Church, we should on the same principles come to the same conclusion with regard to the feast. In a word, the sensible object of the feast is the Heart of Jesus Christ, its spiritual object is the love with which that Heart is inflamed; its end is to lead the faithful to correspond to this immense love, and to make reparation for the outrages it suffers from the ingratitude of men. If on comparing with this feast all the others that relate to Jesus Christ we find none that presents a holier or sweeter object to

the mind and heart, none that brings before us mysteries that are greater or more worthy of the contemplation, admiration, and love of a Christian soul, none that has an end more befitting or better adapted to our holy religion, we must confess too that there is no other feast more excellent in itself than this, and consequently none more worthy of the approbation of the whole Church.

II. The Universal Church instituted the feast of the Body of Jesus Christ—*Festum Corporis Christi.* She instituted the feast of the Name of Jesus—*Festum Nominis Jesu.* She instituted the feast of His Cross —*Festum Crucis.* She can therefore institute the feast of His Heart, since, on the one hand, the Heart of Jesus in itself is not a less excellent object than His Body, His Name, or His Cross; and on the other it contains marvels no less worthy of being annually commemorated in the Church by a solemn feast, as we have already explained.

III. The Church has approved at Rome the feast of the Blood of Jesus Christ, which is solemnly celebrated in certain dioceses in Spain. She has moreover approved of the feast of the Wounds of Jesus Christ. She can therefore approve of the feast of His Heart, which is no less worthy of honour than the Blood of which it is the source, and which has moreover received the Wound that is the deepest, the most fruitful in blessings, the most suggestive of good thoughts, and the most worthy of the contemplation of holy souls.

IV. Not only has the Church approved of the foregoing feasts, which have for their objects things immediately belonging to the Person of Jesus Christ, but she has moreover approved of special feasts in honour of things which have only an outward connection with Him, such as His Crown of Thorns, the Lance and Nails which pierced His Sacred Body, His Winding Sheet, His Manger, and His Swaddling Clothes, &c. Now if these outward things deserve to be honoured by special feasts, because they were employed in some mystery of our Redemption, what are we to think of the very Heart of Jesus Christ? What! is the Church rightly to give its approval to the feast of the lance that pierced the Sacred Heart, and are we then to hear doubts as to whether it can approve of the feast of the Heart, which sanctified that lance, and made a piece of iron, worthless in itself, an object of veneration for the whole Church! What! the recollection of this lance seemed well fitted to move the hearts of the faithful, and this has been considered a sufficient motive for having it honoured by a special solemnity; and would not the thought of the Heart of Jesus wounded by this lance produce the same effect, and would not this be a sufficient motive for authorizing the celebration of a feast in honour of this Divine Heart!

V. The Church has instituted the feast of the Seven Dolours of the Blessed Virgin. How much more reason has she to institute the feast of the Sacred Heart, the centre of the sorrows of Jesus Christ!

VI. Finally, the Church celebrates the feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis, and men question whether she could establish the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus! Moreover, the Church has permitted the Order of St. Teresa to keep the feast of the Piercing of the Heart of their seraphic Mother, in memory of an angel having transfixed it with a burning dart. And after this, can we question that she can authorize the feast of the Heart of Jesus pierced with a lance for the love of us?

We would be wronging our readers if we enlarged upon these arguments in a matter in which all that is needed is a little attention and a little feeling. Even if the feast of the Heart of Jesus were as yet nowhere established, the remarks we have just made, taken in connection with what we have already said in regard to this adorable Heart, would be enough to justify its institution. But we are not in this position. Happily the feast is already celebrated in most of the countries of Christendom, and the only question now is as to extending it, and making it universal.

OBJECTION.

If the Church approves of a feast of the Heart of Jesus, we might equally well ask for other feasts for every member of His sacred Body. For why should we rather have a feast for His Heart, since in His adorable Body all is alike holy through its union with the Divinity? Besides, devotions and feasts are already so numerous in the Church, that it does not

seem expedient to increase the number, for the new offices only interrupt the order of the offices established from the earliest times in the Church.

REPLY.

As this objection has made some impression on many people who have not taken the trouble of looking closely into it, we have thought it necessary to deal with it in this separate section, in order to show in some detail all its weakness. The reader can form his judgment on it by means of the following observations.

In the first place, this objection has not prevented the establishment of more than four hundred large confraternities, in all of which the feast is solemnly celebrated. It has not prevented the Bishops of the chief sees in the Christian world, to the number of about one hundred and eighty, from giving their approbation to these confraternities and to the feast. It has not prevented the Holy See from granting about seven hundred Briefs of Indulgences for the same end. Here we have at the outset a great proof that there is no solid ground for the objection.

In the second place, there is no longer room for debate as to whether the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is worthy of approbation. That question is settled by what we have just remarked, for in a matter of this kind seven hundred Papal Briefs and the opinions of so many Bishops of all the nations of the world are an authority that it would be rash

to reject. Thus the objection raised against the establishment of the feast is for a faithful son of the Church no longer tenable.

Thirdly, the objection that has been made can only have weight so long as it is taken for granted that the reasons that can be adduced in support of the feast of the Sacred Heart would equally apply to the rest of the body; but any one who has paid the least attention to what we have said in this work, whether it be of the nature of the feast in question, or of the prerogatives and pre-eminence of the Heart, or of the other decisive facts to which we have called attention, will see that this assumption is untenable.

With regard to the feast, we have explained its nature in the fourth chapter of the first part, and we have called attention to the fact that having for its spiritual object the love of Jesus Christ outraged by the ingratitude of men, nothing could be more fitting than to make the Heart of Jesus its material object, seeing that it has an essential connection with His love, and that it was the centre of those sorrows which the ingratitude of men inflicted upon Jesus Christ. This remark furnishes us with a reply against which nothing can be alleged: "We celebrate the feast of the Sacred Heart, because at the same time we celebrate the feast of the love of Jesus: here is the *reason why* that you ask for." And as for the conclusion: "Well then, you might equally well celebrate a feast of any part of the Body of Jesus Christ." How does this follow?

As for the prerogatives of the Heart, they are so marked, so peculiar to it, so admirable, and so well ascertained, that it is impossible for a man to read what we have said above on this point, and to have a moment's doubt of its pre-eminence. Now in this pre-eminence we have a clear and sound reply to the objection, for it loses all its force as soon as specific reasons can be alleged for the preference given to the Heart.

It is true, as we have said, that everything in the Sacred Body of Jesus Christ is holy and adorable; but for the institution of a public feast it is not enough that a thing is holy, for feasts are not established in honour of everything that is holy. A choice must be made, and this is directed by the Spirit that guides the Church, and it is clear that this choice always wisely falls upon that which is in each object the chief point, the most excellent, and that which is most likely to attract devotion. All the actions of Jesus Christ were holy, yet the Church does not keep the feasts of all; all the mysteries of the life of this God-Man are holy, yet the Church does not keep the feasts of all. She has selected the chief ones, those that are most wonderful, most moving, most instructive. All the sufferings of our God and Saviour are holy, all are worthy to be remembered with gratitude by the faithful, yet the Church does not keep the feasts of all. It is not then correct reasoning to say that if the feast of the Heart of Jesus is approved of, it will be necessary to approve of

other feasts for every member of His Sacred Body. In all this, as we have said, there is a wise distinction to be made, and this belongs to the Holy Spirit Who inspires the Church.

Amongst other circumstances that we have noticed as of decisive weight in favour of the feast of the Heart of Jesus, the chief one, and that to which the Church principally looks, is the will of God sufficiently manifested to us. Now, in matters of this kind God is wont to manifest His will in many different ways—by special revelations, by miracles, by inspiring pastors with the idea, by exercising a Divine influence which moves the hearts of the people, by various nations acting together, and bishops and sovereign princes presenting petitions to the Church. And it is remarkable that all these signs of the will of God concur in favour of the devotion to and the feast of the Heart of Jesus, as is clear from what we have already stated.

Having made these remarks, let us return to the objection, in order to fully realize its worthlessness in this way: We keep the feast of the Heart of Jesus because that Heart is the chief, the noblest, the most admirable organ of the Body of Jesus Christ; because it is the principle of sensible love in Jesus Christ, the seat of that love, the symbol of that love, the most precious pledge of that love; because it has experienced all the ineffable feelings of that love; because that Divine Heart has been the centre of the sufferings inflicted on Jesus Christ by the

ingratitude of men; because it was intimately connected with these sufferings, and bore them all; finally, because it was pierced by a thrust of the lance, upon the Cross. Now, all these prerogatives, all these attributes belong so specially to the Heart, that they do not apply to the rest of the Body. If then we keep the feast of the Heart of Jesus, must we also have feasts for every member of His Sacred Body? Who does not see that this does not follow? Moreover, with regard to the feast of the Heart of Jesus, we have all the signs of the Divine will that can be looked for—distinct revelations, our chief pastors inspired to favour it, a Divine influence in the hearts of the people, different nations acting together, bishops and crowned heads presenting petitions to the Church, &c. Now, there is nothing like this with regard to all that makes up the rest of the Body of Jesus Christ, therefore it does not follow that there are to be other feasts for it because we celebrate that of His Heart. Here we really see what this wonderful objection, so often debated, is reduced to. It is so frivolous that even a man who is but half instructed on the subject ought to be ashamed to propose it.

As for those who fear that the devotion to the Heart of Jesus and its feast will be made a pretext for introducing other devotions and other feasts that seem to them unsuitable, they do not pay attention to an invariable fact which would calm their apprehensions, namely, that the establishment of a devo-

tion and a feast in the Church is not the work of men but of God only. A man may very well invent some special devotion little befitting the holiness, the majesty, and the wisdom of the Church of Christ; he may undertake to establish it, practise it himself, and try to impart it to others, but to gain the end, to establish a feast for it throughout a great part of the Church and amongst many different peoples, to make it spread from province to province, and from kingdom to kingdom—in a word, to make it universal and lasting, as has been the case with the devotion to the Heart of Jesus, this is beyond mere human power. And thus he does not recognize the Providence that watches over the Church, who fears lest the establishment of a devotion so plainly marked with the seal of the Divine will, as is that of the Sacred Heart, should give rise to other devotions that might be inadmissible.

But, we are told, there are already enough devotions and feasts in the Church; it is no use to multiply them further. What! are we then to set limits to the action of God's Providence? Are we to settle that in the treasures of God's wisdom there are no more devotions or feasts calculated to give edification to the Church, to honour Jesus Christ, and excite the fervour of the faithful? Those who have fears about the multiplication of feasts such as this one, do not reflect either upon the unvarying action of Providence, which, in all ages, has made use of this means to excite and renew the devotion of the people, or on

the glory they give to Jesus Christ, for Whom these devotions and feasts procure new honours, or on the advantage which the people derive from them for the sanctification and salvation of their souls; for these devotions and feasts are inexhaustible sources of spiritual blessings. In fact, without wandering from our subject, we may ask who can say how much the feast of the Sacred Heart, once it is established, will do for the glory of Jesus Christ and the good of souls, by means of those exercises and practices of devotion that specially belong to it? For the glory of Jesus Christ, by the repeated acts of those virtues that have this for their end—faith, love, contrition, reparation, praise, thanksgiving; for the good of souls by confessions, Communions, Indulgences, Masses, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, alms, acts of penance, of mortification, of humility, &c. Who can count how many such acts of devotion, interior as well as exterior, are already performed by the four hundred confraternities now existing in the Church, some of which, like that of Dijon, number as many as thirty thousand members? If our opponents would think of this immense treasury of merits, that enriches the Church, and will enrich it for centuries, would they venture to bring against us the objection that it is not expedient to increase the number of feasts? Ah, this maxim has nothing to do with a feast like this. On the contrary the institution of the feast of the Heart of Jesus should be regarded as a special favour of Heaven, and as a special pledge of the love of

Christ, worthy to be accepted by the Church with the most loving respect and the most lively feelings of gratitude. But we are also told that these new feasts interrupt the order of the offices established in the Church from early times. We reply that, in the first place, if this objection is of any weight, we should put an end to the dedication of churches, the canonization of saints, the translation of relics, &c., for all this leads to new feasts and new offices; and in the second place, if we are to diminish the number of feasts, is it well to diminish those that immediately relate to the Person of Jesus Christ, and are intended to make Him more loved, and have no other end but this? Ought not a feast of this kind rather be a joy to the Church, and the object of its ardent zeal? It is true that upon the day of the feast the order of other offices must be interrupted. But when the Church substitutes for the office of a Feria a new office that gives more glory to God, and is of greater spiritual profit to the faithful, is there any reason for complaints and murmurs?

Remarks on the Feast of the Heart of Mary.

No fixed and determined day has as yet been assigned to this feast, as has been done in the case of that of the Heart of Jesus, which is now kept in all places on the first Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi. The feast of the Heart of Mary is kept on different days in different dioceses, but as uniformity is much to be desired, it seems to us that

the Sunday within the octave of the Assumption would be a very good day to choose for this solemnity, and this for the following reasons, which we humbly submit to the chief pastors of the Church.

I. In order to obtain the greater glory for the Heart of the Blessed Virgin, by giving the people the opportunity of celebrating its feast with more devotion and in greater numbers on a day, when being free from work, they could more easily devote themselves to exercises of piety, to approaching the sacraments, assisting at sermons and services, visiting the churches, and gaining the indulgences attached to the feast.

II. Because the feast of the Heart of Mary being at once the feast of her love, her affections, her joys, her sorrows, her virtues, and glories, is, as it were, a summary of all the mysteries of her life and of all her feasts. Consequently, this solemnity cannot have a better place assigned to it than at the close of all the rest, and immediately after that of the Assumption, which is the last of the feasts of the Blessed Virgin that the Church celebrates. It is thus that the feast of the Heart of Jesus closes the series of the feasts of our Lord Jesus Christ.

III. This Sunday is already devoted to the honour of the Blessed Virgin on account of the octave of the Assumption; if the feast of the Heart of Mary were assigned to this day, it would contribute in the highest degree to increase the joy of the Church, and the devotion of the faithful to the Blessed Virgin during her solemn octave.

IV. The Church, by following this suggestion, would only follow her own precedents, for she has fixed three new feasts of the Blessed Virgin on three different Sundays—the feast of the Name of Mary on the Sunday within the octave of her Nativity, the feast of the Rosary on the first Sunday in October, and the feast of the Patronage of the Blessed Virgin, *Festum Patrocinii B. V. Mariæ*, on the second Sunday in November. Therefore she would not depart from the course already marked out by the Holy Spirit if she chose a Sunday already partly dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, to devote it entirely to a feast so excellent in itself, so dear to our Blessed Lady, and so worthy of the love and the fervent devotion of the faithful, as this feast of the Heart of our admirable and amiable Mother.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE OFFICE OF THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY.

THE Divine Office is a necessary part of the solemnization of a feast, and, strictly speaking, it is really in the celebration of the Office that the feast consists. There is thus no feast without its office, and as soon as the Church approves of a feast, its usage is to give its approbation at the same time to an office proper for the feast. The feast of Corpus Christi has its office, the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus has its office, the feast of the Holy Cross has its office. On the same principle, the special feasts that the Church allows to be kept in certain churches have their proper offices. In Spain the feast of the Blood of Jesus has its proper office, which we have read and admired. There are special offices for the feasts of the Crown of Thorns, the Nails, the Spear, the Winding-sheet, &c. Therefore, the feast of the Heart of Jesus being already established in many important dioceses, requires a proper office for those churches in which this feast is celebrated, and there is all the more reason for this in the fact that the confraternities of the Sacred Heart have permission to erect chapels and churches in its honour. To ascer-

tain this, one need only read the Brief of Indulgence of the Holy See, in which this permission is given and taken for granted. Now, in accordance with the rules of the Church, the office of their titular feast should be observed in chapels and churches. Thus the recital of the office of these most blessed Hearts cannot be dispensed with in those churches which are dedicated to the Heart of Jesus or the Heart of Mary, and when permission is given to keep the feast, the granting of an office for its celebration must necessarily follow.

Acting on these principles, many bishops in various countries have approved of the Office of the Heart of Jesus, and the Office of the Heart of Mary.

CHAPTER VII.

ON PICTURES OF THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY.

THE picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus has not been everywhere received with the respect and love that it deserves. It has even been subjected to a kind of persecution on the part of the opponents of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus. It is remarked in the Life of the Venerable Margaret Mary that the first pencil sketch of the Sacred Heart, that was made by the novices whom this holy woman directed, aroused a storm against her which could only be appeased by putting the picture out of sight. It has encountered the same opposition in other places where the devotion to the Heart of Jesus has been made the subject of contradiction, hostility to the one being the natural consequence of hostility to the other.

On the opposite principle, wherever the Heart of Jesus has found adorers, the picture of His Divine Heart has been honoured; and it has been multiplied according as the number of the servants of the Heart of Jesus has increased. In fact, when we love anything, its picture becomes pleasing to us, and the sight of it consoles us. It excites in our hearts the

same feelings as would be called forth by the thing itself; to a certain extent, it holds the place of it in our regard, hence the feelings of devotion that pictures or images of Jesus Christ excite in souls that are moved by His love. St. Teresa said that she would like to have His image in every place to which she turned her eyes. At the sight of it there arise in pure souls feelings of tender affection, which are really known only by those who have had the happiness of experiencing them.

The love of the sacred Humanity of Jesus Christ, with which the Holy Spirit inspires such souls, makes all that belongs to it infinitely dear to them —His Soul, His Body, His Blood, His wounds, His Name, His feet, His hands, His pierced side, His face, His Cross, His nails, His thorns, His swaddling-clothes, His garments, His winding-sheet, His Crib, &c.; for them all these sacred objects, as well as the pictures that represent them, have attractions and charms, as one may remark in their lives and writings. The Church is so convinced that these images tend to edify the faithful, that she everywhere presents them to their sight. What is more common than representations of the Cross of Jesus Christ, of His Holy Name, His wounds, His winding-sheet, and the instruments of His Passion? But if it be true that these representations are holy, useful, edifying, and well calculated to excite, maintain, and support the devotion of the faithful, what should we think of pictures of the Heart of Jesus?

But there is a still more cogent reason. It is the custom to expose to the sight and veneration of the faithful pictures of the hearts of certain saints, for instance, St. Augustine and St. Francis of Sales are represented holding in their hands a burning heart, which is a representation of their own hearts on fire with the love of God. These pictures are to be found in a hundred places, and yet the piety of the faithful is not offended thereby. How then can the piety of these same people take offence at the picture of the Heart of Jesus Christ burning with the fire of His love! Besides, there is the picture of the heart of St. Teresa, which is represented with the wound it received from the burning dart with which a seraph pierced it. This picture is common in Spain, and it is to be found in a thousand other places. We have seen it, and had it in our hands in the middle of Rome. The devout clients of this seraphic Saint keep it with respect, and lovingly kiss it, and it serves to excite their fervour; and are we to be told that the picture of the Heart of Jesus, pierced by the spear, would not produce the same effect! What! has the picture of the Heart of our God and Redeemer less power to touch our hearts than the picture of the heart of some saint?

When we consider these things, we are more inclined to lament than to argue, and we ask ourselves in our surprise, "How is it that Christians are thus possessed by a prejudice at once so unjust and so contrary to piety—a prejudice against the picture of

the Heart of Jesus their Saviour, a picture that is the most holy, the most sweet, the most amiable they could possibly have, seeing that it is the symbol of the love of Jesus Christ? We can only look for the source of this astounding state of mind in the hatred of the demon against Jesus Christ, and in the artifices he makes use of to oppose all that contributes to the glory of the God-Man. We have already remarked that the Holy Spirit inspires men with the most lively and tender feelings of respect and love for the sacred Humanity of Jesus Christ, and for all that belongs to it. The devil does the opposite. He has an implacable hatred for that adorable Humanity, and for all that relates to it—the Flesh of Jesus, His Blood, His wounds, His Cross are to him objects of abhorrence, but above all, he abhors His Sacred Heart, as being the instrument and seat of His love, and the centre of those sufferings that worked out our redemption. From this we may easily imagine how the picture of this adorable Heart must arouse his fury.

Long ago, when St. Bernardine of Siena, inspired by God, undertook to establish the worship of the Name of Jesus, he had to encounter a pitiless opposition. So fierce were the attacks directed against this sacred symbol that the Church was disturbed by them, and the Holy See could hardly put an end to them by using its authority. We cannot therefore be surprised that in our own days the same enemy of Jesus Christ has assailed with all his might the devotion to the Heart of

Jesus, and has risen up against the pictures of the Sacred Heart, and spared nothing to excite a distaste and dislike for them. But just as the efforts he made against the symbol of the Name of Jesus were defeated, and brought to nothing by the power of Jesus Christ, so that soon it was to be seen glittering on all sides in the churches, and became the object of the veneration and the tenderest devotion of the faithful, the attacks he makes against the picture of the Sacred Heart will have the same result. In fact, we already have the consolation of seeing this picture in thousands of places, everywhere it is the delight of pure souls, and we have a firm confidence that it will daily become more common.

This ought to be one of the chief interests of those who are devout to the Heart of Jesus: they should zealously endeavour to obtain this glory for the Sacred Heart, in order thereby to make reparation for the injury the devil has done it, by inspiring men with a dislike for its picture. They should have the picture exposed for veneration with the greatest possible magnificence in churches, in houses, in private oratories. The should carry it about with them as a precious token of their love for Jesus Christ, and as a defence against the temptations of the devil, who must fear and shun this image more than any other. Jesus Christ was pleased to declare in a revelation recorded by Mother Margaret Mary, that the picture of His Heart was a cause of delight to Him, that He desired it to be exposed for the veneration of the

faithful, and that He would shed abundant blessings on the places where it was venerated, and on those who honoured it. We have already spoken of the practice which the celebrated Lanspergius taught to interior souls two hundred years ago, namely, that of having pictures of the Heart of Jesus, putting them in places where we can often see them, and honouring them with tender devotion as a valued source of blessings to us.

This holy picture is, as we have said, already to be found in a thousand places. It is painted, it is engraved, it is carved, it is represented in different ways, and variously adorned, according to the genius and taste of the artist, or the devotion of those who desire to possess it. Some pious persons have wished it to be drawn for them as plainly as possible, and in its natural form—that is to say, in the very form that belongs to the heart in the human body, as they find more devotion in honouring the Heart of Jesus Christ, represented as it really is in the sacred breast of our Divine Saviour. This, indeed, seems to us very reasonable. If we were to honour the hand of Jesus Christ, what we would like to have would be the most natural and exact representation of that Divine hand. Why not take the same view with regard to His Heart? It is therefore to satisfy the devotion of these persons that we have had engraved the pictures of the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary, which we here give. The crown of thorns and the cross which are to be seen in the picture of the Heart

of Jesus are symbols of the sufferings which that Sacred Heart embraced with so much love in order to save us. It was thus adorned when it was shown to Mother Margaret Mary in her heavenly vision, and it was besides surrounded with flames to show its love, and it shone like a sun.

CHAPTER VIII.

EXERCISES OF DEVOTION IN HONOUR OF THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY.

ALTHOUGH in the practice of any kind of devotion it is better to follow the promptings of one's own heart and one's interior spirit in the acts that one elicits rather than to rigidly tie oneself down to the forms to be found in books, nevertheless as help of this kind is necessary to many souls who, when unaided, are not capable of occupying themselves in prayer, and as it may be of use to all, in order that they may form a correct idea of the nature of the acts that belong to each devotion, and as, besides, it is the general custom to give such forms, we have thought it well to place here various exercises in honour of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Each one can form others of the same kind for himself, according to his capacity and devotion.

Act of Praise and Adoration in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

O adorable Heart of Jesus, hypostatically united to the Eternal Word, and therefore, in very truth, the Heart of God, holy with the holiness of God, truly sharing in the goodness, the mercy, and the charity

of God; O Heart ineffable in Thy incomprehensible perfection, whose feelings and affections must all correspond and be proportioned to the infinite greatness and majesty of God, and who art therefore worthy of infinite praise and adoration; in thee, O Divine Heart, are united all the gifts of Heaven; thou art the inexhaustible fountain of all good; thou art the principle of all the purest, the most sublime, the most heroic, the most God-like virtues; thou art the throne of uncreated and eternal love. Thou alone hast been a victim worthy of God's justice, and capable of making satisfaction to it. Thou art, for all these reasons, the most worthy object of the delight of the Ever Blessed Trinity, and of the adoration of angels and of men. O Jesus, our sweet and adorable Saviour, this the infinite excellence of Thy Heart had not hitherto been known as it should be. Hitherto Thy Sacred Heart had not been the object of a special devotion in Thy Church. Thou didst reserve this favour for these latter times, in which, out of Thy infinite love, Thou hast been pleased to make known to men the riches that are contained in Thy Divine Heart, riches that it is ever ready to bestow on those who honour it according to Thy desire. Blessed and praised for ever be this Thy mercy. Grant that I may participate in it. Moved by the ardent desire that I feel to have some share in these ineffable riches, I venture confidently to draw near to Thy Sacred Heart. Help me to worthily pay it that tribute of praise and adoration that is its due.

Deign, O Sacred Heart, to receive me into the number of Thy devoted servants, unworthy as I am of such a favour. I cast myself before Thee with the deepest humility of which my heart is capable. I acknowledge with wondering joy Thy majesty, Thy greatness, and Thy excellence, I pay Thee that supreme worship which is due to thee, and that praise which belongs to Thy infinite perfection. But, alas! I am only too well aware that the affections of my heart are as nothing, that they are unworthy of Thee, and in order to make amends for my unworthiness and my helplessness, I offer Thee all the honour and praise that is paid to Thee by Thy angels and saints. I offer Thee what is most worthy of Thee, the Heart of Thy Blessed Mother. I unite my miserable self to her great Heart, which so far as it is possible for a creature, is alone capable of worthily honouring and praising Thee. In union with her merits, I offer myself entirely to Thee, and I consecrate to Thy glory all that I am, and all that I can do. Hear my prayer, O adorable Heart, and receive me under Thy sweet and all powerful protection. Amen.

Act of Love for the Heart of Jesus.

O sweetest Heart of Jesus, wherein are united all those Divine perfections that belong to the Heart of the Son of God, and all those human perfections that belong to the Heart of the Son of Man! O Heart, the noblest, greatest, largest, most liberal, most

generous, and most magnificent of all hearts, and at the same time the gentlest, the most humble, the purest, the most innocent, the most patient, the most loving Heart that ever can exist! O Heart of our God, of our Redeemer, of our Benefactor! Heart of our Friend, of our Brother, of our Father, of the Spouse of our souls, claiming our tenderest love by all these sweet titles! Thou wast formed of the most pure blood of Thy Mother, the purest of Virgins, Thou wast the principle of the life of the God-Man, of that Divine life that was entirely devoted to our salvation. Thou art the source of the Precious Blood that ransomed us. Thou art the seat of mercy. Thou art the true and sincere lover of men, and in Thy immense love Thou dost embrace all, both just and sinners. For love of us Thou hast been pierced with the spear upon the Cross. Thou hast been the innocent victim of our sins, offered in sacrifice to the Divine justice in the midst of immense sufferings in order to expiate them. O Sacred Heart, which for all these reasons art most worthy of our love, our gratitude, and our tender affection, deign to receive the acts of ardent and tender love that my heart offers to thee. I give Thee a thousand and a thousand thanks for the love with which Thou dost burn for us, and for the countless benefits Thou hast bestowed upon us. I unite myself as closely as I can to Thee. I embrace Thee and I love Thee with all the affection of my soul. I devote and consecrate myself to Thee for ever. To thee, O gentlest, sweetest, and most

amiable of all hearts, to Thee be glory, praise, thanksgiving, and love from all hearts, and dominion over all hearts. Amen.

Invocation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Heart of Jesus, Who alone hast lawful dominion over the hearts of mankind, deign to make all hearts subject to thy sway. Take possession of them all, even of those that are now in rebellion against Thee. Force them to submit to Thee by that sweet and loving rule Thou dost exercise over them when it pleases Thee. Do not permit them at any time to withdraw themselves from Thy dominion over them, which is so just, so necessary, so glorious for them. Make them ever docile to Thy will. At the same time, O holiest and most perfect of hearts, be Thou the model of our hearts. Make them humble, meek, patient, charitable, pure like Thee. Curb the passions that disturb them, by pouring into them those heavenly desires of which Thou art the fruitful source; purify them from the earthly desires that defile them. Strengthen them where they are inconstant, soften their hardness, enrich their poverty, raise up their desires to Heaven, and inflame them with the fire with which Thou Thyself art ever burning. In a word, make them such that they may be pleasing to Thee, and may honour, love, and imitate Thee, so as to possess Thee for all eternity. Amen.

Act of Reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus to make amends for the outrages He suffers in the Blessed Sacrament.

O Heart of Jesus, ever on fire with love for men and ever outraged by their ingratitude! Thou hast done everything on earth during Thy mortal life to show Thy love to men, even so far as to wear Thyself out, and to consume Thyself for them. Thy love was repaid then by nothing but contempt and the most disgraceful insult. And now that Thou burnest with the self-same love in the Holy Eucharist, where Thou art still dwelling in Thy Sacrament of love in the midst of us, Thou dost suffer at the hands of ungrateful men the most cruel outrages, though they have no longer the excuse of ignorance, and know now what Thou art. I see Thee on our altars exposed during the lapse of so many hundred years to numberless irreverences, sacrileges, and insults, the memory of which fills me with horror, and which are going on now even amongst those who believe in the true faith. Moved by these outrages, I prostrate myself before Thee, O adorable Heart, and weep for Thine outraged love. I beg Thy pardon for the ingratitude of which I myself am guilty. I detest the sins which I have committed in Thy presence by irreverence, coldness, and negligence. I would make reparation for them, as also for the abominations committed against Thee by so many heretics and bad Catholics. Would that by my homage and my grief I could make amends to Thy injured honour. Would that by my

tears and my blood I could wash out the insults I deplore. Would that by some new kind of homage I could atone for so many irreverences, insults, and sacrileges. My life would not be too much to sacrifice for so worthy an object. Grant me, O Sacred Heart, by Thine own sweetness and boundless mercy, the pardon which I ask for, and give me grace to keep the resolution, which I now make, to do all I can for the future to pay Thee in the Sacrament of Thy love the profound adoration which I owe Thee, and to show Thee that gratitude and love which are justly due to Thee. I resolve to repair my past faults by the modesty of my deportment in Thy churches, by my constancy in visiting Thee, my devotion and fervour in receiving Thee; and, in fulfilment of Thy desire, I impose upon myself the duty of often repeating acts of reparation in Thy presence, as Thou hast deigned to direct, in order as far I can to atone for the injuries done Thee by others, and of which Thy very love makes Thee the victim in this Divine Sacrament. Bless, I beseech Thee, this resolve, and give me grace to keep it faithfully. Amen.

Offering of ourselves and of all that belongs to us to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Père de la Colombière is the author of this exercise, which is to be found at the end of his Journal of his Retreats. We shall make no change in it. Here it is as he left it in his handwriting:

"The object of this offering is to honour this

Divine Heart, the seat of all virtues, the fountain of all blessings, and the refuge of all holy souls.

"The chief virtues to be honoured in the Sacred Heart of Jesus are: First, a most ardent love for God His Father, and together with this the most profound respect for Him and the greatest humility that ever was. Secondly, infinite patience in suffering, deep sorrow and contrition for the sins of which He assumed the burden, the confidence of a most loving son, united with the confusion of the greatest of sinners. Thirdly, the most tender sympathy with us in our miseries, an immense love for us wretched as we are, and notwithstanding all these feelings, each of which existed in Him in its highest possible degree, an unruffled peace, the result of so perfect a conformity with the will of God, that it could not be disturbed by any event, no matter how disappointing it might be to His zeal or even to His love and to all His other feelings.

"His Heart is still, so far as may be, in the same dispositions, but above all it is ever burning with love for men, ever open to bestow upon them graces and blessings of all kinds; ever sympathizing with our woes; ever full of the longing desire to share with us its treasures and to give itself to us; ever ready to receive us, and to become our refuge, our abode, and after this our paradise.

"Notwithstanding all this, He finds in the hearts of men only hardness, forgetfulness, neglect, and ingratitude. He loves, and He is not loved; nay,

His love is not even known, because men will not deign to accept the gifts by which He would prove it to them, or listen to the tender words of love that He would speak to them in the secret of their hearts.

"O most amiable and adorable Heart of my beloved Jesus, in reparation for so many outrages and so much cruel ingratitude, and in order, as far as it is in my power, to avoid falling into the like miserable condition, I offer Thee my heart with all the movements of which it is capable. I give myself all to Thee, and I declare sincerely that I desire from this hour to forget myself and all that belongs to me, in order that I may thus remove any obstacle that might stand in the way of my entering into Thy Divine Heart, which Thou hast in Thy goodness opened to me, and into which I desire to be admitted to live and die therein amidst Thy most faithful servants. Penetrated and inflamed with love of Thee, I offer to Thy Heart all the merit and all the satisfaction of all my Masses, prayers, mortifications, and devout practices, of all my acts of zeal, humility, obedience, and all the other virtues that I may practise until the last moment of my life. Not only do I perform all this in honour of the Heart of Jesus and of its admirable perfections, but moreover I most humbly beg of that Heart that it will accept the full offering that I make to it, and dispose thereof according to its good pleasure and in favour of whomsoever it may choose. And as I have already given to the holy souls in Purgatory whatever there is in

my actions that can make satisfaction to the Justice of God, I desire that this may be distributed to them according to the good pleasure of the Heart of Jesus.

"This, however, is not to prevent me from discharging whatever obligations I may be under of saying Masses and praying for certain intentions prescribed to me by obedience; or from saying Masses out of charity for poor people, or at the request of my brothers and friends. But as in these cases I shall be making use of what does not belong to me, I desire, as is but just, that the merit of the obedience, charity, and the other virtues I may practise on these occasions shall belong to the Heart of Jesus, from which I will have derived the very power of exercising them, so that the merit of them must belong to it without any reserve.

"Sacred Heart of Jesus, teach me perfect forgetfulness of self, since this is the only way by which one can enter into Thee. And as all that I shall do for the future will belong to Thee, grant that I may do nothing that is not in some degree worthy of Thee. Teach me what I should do in order to attain to that pure love, with the desire of which Thou hast inspired me. I feel a great wish to please Thee, but a still greater powerlessness to reach this end, unless I am given special light and aid for which I can only look to Thee. May Thy will be done in me, O Lord. I know only too well that I oppose obstacles to it, but I earnestly desire to make no such opposition. It will be Thy work, O Divine

Heart of Jesus Christ, to accomplish all for me. Thou alone wilt have all the glory of sanctifying me, if I become holy. To me this is as plain as day. For Thee it will be a great source of glory, and I wish to aspire to perfection for this end alone. Amen."

Exercise in honour of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

Permit me, O most august Mother of God, to unite myself to those holy souls who devote themselves to honouring with special veneration thy Sacred Heart, in order that I may thus have a share in the favours that are attached to a devotion that is so pleasing to thy Divine Son and to thee.

O Sacred Heart of Mary, ever immaculate and virginally pure! O Heart, after that of Jesus, the holiest, the purest, the noblest, the greatest, that the Almighty Hand of the Creator has ever formed! O inexhaustible fountain of goodness, sweetness, mercy, and love, model of all the highest and purest virtues, perfect image of the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ. O Sacred Heart, ever burning with the most ardent charity. Thou alone hast loved God more than all the Seraphim. By the least of thy affections thou hast given more glory to God than has been given to Him by the most heroic actions of all other creatures. O Heart of the Mother of our Redeemer! seat of peace, in which justice and mercy formed their alliance, and the terms of peace between Heaven and earth were first discussed. Heart that hast felt the widest and the most tender charity for men; that

hast so keenly sympathized with our miseries; that hast conceived so many ardent desires of our happiness; that hast suffered such immense sorrows for our salvation. Sacred Heart, that art still the same as ever, and as far as thy glorified state wilt permit, hast still those same dispositions that give thee such claims upon our admiration and love, and that for all these reasons art worthy of all the praise, veneration, love, confidence, and affection, that angels and men can give thee, deign to accept my poor service. Prostrate before thee, I pay thee the most profound homage of which my soul is capable. I most humbly thank thee for those feelings of mercy and compassion with which thou hast so often been moved at the sight of my miseries. I give thee thanks for all the blessings I have received—blessings that have been drawn down upon me through that inexhaustible abyss of goodness that belongs to thee. I unite myself, O Heart worthy of the Mother of a God and a Saviour, I unite myself with all those pure souls who take delight in giving thee honour, praise, and love. They have been taught by the Spirit of God which guides them that it is through thee we must go to Jesus, and discharge all the obligations we are under to the God-Man: that it is through thee we must adore Him, love Him, bless Him, thank Him, pray to Him, offer ourselves to Him, and thus by thy riches supply for all the needs of our poverty. Therefore, O most admirable and amiable Heart, thou shalt be henceforth the object of my veneration and

love. Thou shalt be the way by which I shall go to my adorable Saviour, and through thee His mercy will come to me. Thou shalt be my refuge in my needs, my consolation in my afflictions. Thou shalt be the mirror into which I shall look, the sacred school to which I shall go to learn the lessons of my Divine Master. I shall come to thee to study His Divine maxims, from thee I shall learn purity, humility, meekness, patience, contempt for the world, and, above all, love for Jesus. I shall ask for these virtues through thy merits, and I shall obtain them. O Heart of Mary, throne of charity, of mercy, and of peace, I venture to offer thee my heart stained as it is by a thousand sins, and disturbed by a thousand unruly passions: unworthy as it is of thee, I trust that thou wilt not despise it. Purify it, sanctify it, detach it from creatures, fill it with sorrow for its sins, and inflame it with love for thee and for Jesus Christ. In a word, make it like to thee, that so it may be worthy to be united to thee in Heaven, and there with thee love God for all eternity. Amen.

THE END.

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